Commentary

VOLUME EIGHTY-THREE • NUMBER TWO • FEBRUARY 1987

Why the Soviets Want an Arms-Control Agreement, And Why They Want It Now

Eugene V. Rostow

My Mother's Conversion
Dan Vittorio Segre

Of Markets and Myths
Robert B. Reich

Houses of the Dead
Fernanda Eberstadt

Patients
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Israel's Alienated Intellectuals
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Post-Counterculture Tristesse
Carol Iannone

Books in Review: Edward N. Luttwak/Robert S. Wistrich/ Walter Berns/Luis E. Aguilar/Maurice Friedberg

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COMMENTARY (ISSN 0010-2601) is published monthly by the American Jewish Committee—Single copy is $3.50, $36 a year; 2 years $68, 3 years $99—Add $7.00 per year for all foreign, including Canada and Latin America—Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to COMMENTARY, 165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.
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EDITORIAL & BUSINESS OFFICES: 165 E. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022

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Letters from Readers

AIDS & the Law

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is curious that in defending the Supreme Court's decision on sodomy, David Robinson, Jr. ["Sodomy and the Supreme Court," October 1986] should invoke the public-health risk of AIDS, an issue which long postdates the legislation he seeks to justify. One wonders whether, if some equally dire health hazard should some day be discovered in circumcision or holy water, he would reconsider the issue of religious freedom. Or could the eventual spread of AIDS to the heterosexual community justify similar strictures against all sexual relations?

What is insidious about Mr. Robinson's reasoning is that it attacks not the evil itself—ostensibly the transmission of AIDS—but rather ancillary behavior that is only a contributing risk factor. Surely the fact that sodomy can be, and commonly is, practiced with virtually no risk of spreading AIDS (by females and by noninfected heterosexuals and homosexuals who take appropriate precautions) must be of crucial relevance to its legality. The distinction is as fundamental as that between possessing a gun and actually using it to kill someone.

On closer examination, Mr. Robinson's argument is further weakened by an underlying, unstated paternalism. Although he claims to argue on grounds of public health, he fails to show how the risk of AIDS affects anyone other than those who *voluntarily* indulge in high-risk behavior (i.e., sodomy or the sharing of drug needles). While in fact the rest of the public does face a small risk of picking up AIDS from blood transfusions and other accidents, Mr. Robinson does not discuss this —not surprisingly, since the risk is minor compared to other public-health hazards, and likely to remain so. Mr. Robinson's desired prohibition of sodomy is therefore of scant benefit to himself or to the rest of us who refrain from high-risk homosexual activity. Instead, the apparent "beneficiaries" are members of the homosexual community—who most vociferously reject Mr. Robinson's paternalism.

The question of why Mr. Robinson is so eager to preserve the sodomites whom God would destroy is best left to homophobic fundamentalists. Nevertheless, homosexuals may rightly suspect that Mr. Robinson is not so much interested in their welfare as in stigmatizing them for what are the practices of an imprudent minority. The rest of us, including the tens of millions of Americans who safely practice nontraditional sex, would do well to join them in opposing Mr. Robinson's legal efforts to impose Old Testament morality on spurious grounds of public health.

DALE GIERINGER
Oakland, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I had little doubt that *Bowers* v. *Hardwick* had been correctly decided until I read David Robinson, Jr.'s article. It was such a strained defense of the result that I had to reread the case to satisfy myself that indeed my initial reaction was correct.

Thank heavens the Supreme Court did not accept Mr. Robinson's invitation to find an after-the-fact justification for Georgia's anti-sodomy statute in the unfortunate relationship between homosexual conduct and human disease. Had it done so, it would have created further warrant for the peculiar notion that the state is entitled to protect individuals from the foreseeable consequences of their own, volitional acts. Mr. Robinson's suggested justification would also have been an irrational basis for decision, because among heterosexuals at least, AIDS is apparently as likely to be transmitted by legal sexual activity as by sodomy, and because more disease has been spread by old-fashioned, heterosexual, missionary lovemaking than by all the homosexual coupling in history. Fundamentally, people ought to have a right to be wrong, even self-destructive. As a matter of social policy, the Georgia statute is silly, and not to be salvaged by Mr. Robinson's proffered rationale that Georgia was only trying to protect homosexuals from the fatal consequences of their lusts. It is refreshing to see the Court spurning a clunker every now and then.

The recognition that society ought to respect the right of individuals to differ—to be wrong, if

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you will—permeates Justice Blackmun's lucid dissent, and were it not for an analytical omission that goes to the heart of the issue, the fair observer would have to conclude that the dissent is both emotionally and logically more compelling than the majority opinion.

The weakness of the dissent is that, as much as one might agree that the state has no business telling adults they can't bugger each other in the privacy of their own homes (even if it is bad for them), that is not what the Constitution says, and unless the Constitution means whatever five Justices say it means, you cannot torture the text to yield that result.

The dissenters did not mind stretching the Constitution to serve their sense of the good society because they come from a school that has long viewed federalism—a concept central to the constitutional scheme—as no more than an embarrassing anachronism. Hence they are unwilling to defer to the judgment of the people and their elected representatives, whenever that judgment results in choices these judges wouldn't have made. . . .

The fact is that the Constitution, as great a creation as it is, by its terms preserves only a narrow sphere of human activity from government interference, implicitly relying instead upon the diversity of the several states to ensure that a person feeling himself unduly constrained by the exercise of the police power in one location can find a more congenial environment in another. That is, Mr. Hardwick's recourse against the allegedly inhibiting effect of the Georgia statute —and it is only in the Alice in Wonderland world of constitutional posturing that Mr. Hardwick and his co-petitioners, Jane and John Doe, could claim with a straight face to be inhibited by this statute—is to move to one of the many jurisdictions where the law indeed supports his right to engage in sodomy with his bedroom door open. For all but a few forms of activity—and the areas in which governmental interference is proscribed are spelled out quite clearly in the Constitution . . . — the harsh truth is that "like it or leave" is the constitutional norm.

Bowers v. *Hardwick* was decided correctly because there should be few occasions on which we look to a single source, be it the Congress or the Supreme Court, to tell all fifty states at once what they may forbid or require. Encouraging five Justices of the Supreme Court to determine what is or is not "implicit in the concept of an ordered liberty," according to their shifting lights, is a greater threat to our freedom than is permitting a state to maintain a silly statute that is apparently impossible to violate.

Mr. Robinson, who relegated the federalism implications of *Hardwick* to a few lines, would have done a real service had he discussed the case in terms of judicial respect for the text of the Constitution rather than as a missed opportunity to strike a blow against insidious sexual practices.

MAYNARD F. THOMSON
Cleveland, Ohio

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

After reading "Sodomy and the Supreme Court," I was tempted to ask, What is a nice Jewish magazine like COMMENTARY doing publishing a homophobic article like that? Mr. Robinson, a medical layman, believed that upholding the sodomy laws would assist in responding to the AIDS crisis. He contacted various professionals, including the American Public Health Association (APHA), to solicit their support. They rejected his motives and the APHA, instead, submitted an *amicus* brief opposing such laws on the grounds that they undermine public-health measures. Unable to find a medical professional to submit such a brief, Mr. Robinson filed on his own behalf. . . .

It is generally believed by health professionals that fear of discrimination makes homosexuals reluctant to take appropriate measures such as early medical examinations and testing that reduce the spread of AIDS. Homosexual organizations are the main providers of information on safe sex practices that prevent the spread of AIDS. Yet the sodomy laws have been used to deny recognition and funding to such organizations on university campuses. Public-health decisions should be left in the hands of qualified medical professionals. Sodomy laws were not necessary to close homosexual bathhouses and bars in New York and California when they were considered to be a menace to public health.

Had Mr. Robinson confined his remarks to self-serving comments implying that his layman's medical opinions swayed the Court toward a rational solution to the AIDS epidemic, we could dismiss him as a mere crank. However, his comment that Justice Blackmun's dissent "invoked the liturgies of autonomous hedonism" betrays his undisclosed motives and a homophobic mind set. . . .

JAMES A. WEBBER
San Luis Obispo, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

David Robinson, Jr. was surprised that the American Public Health Association opposes sodomy laws. I'm not. The APHA's opposition springs not from any libertarian distrust of overweening government; it reflects, rather, the organization's location on the political spectrum: to the Left of the San Francisco Democrats. What the APHA and groups like it have done is to medicalize politics. That is, they condemn *in their professional capacities* anything that is not good for your health—like getting hit by a nuclear bomb.

Such shenanigans exact a penalty. In the case of sodomy, it has meant an abdication of professional responsibility, the abandonment of the duty to warn against predictably dangerous acts.

Sodomy leads to fecal contamination, which is the microbiological equivalent of eating sewage. That is, it is the sanitary equivalent of a journey to the Third World or a trip backward in time to the early 19th century, before cities like London had pure drinking water and sewers.

The result, for homosexuals, has been an alarming rate of infection by bowel pathogens, both bacterial and parasitic. Most of these pathogens were described in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and their mode of transmission was perfectly understood well before the arrival of the sexual revolution of the 1960's. And all this, of course, occurred before AIDS. . . .

ROBERT CARLEN, M.D.
Sayville, New York

DAVID ROBINSON, JR. writes:

I do not share Dale Gieringer's abhorrence of paternalism with respect to homosexuals (or others), and I also cannot agree that AIDS affects no one who refrains from voluntarily indulging in sodomy or intravenous drug abuse. Many members of high-risk groups do not confine their sexual contacts to others who are similarly inclined. According to the Kinsey studies, most males who have homosexual

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experiences are at least somewhat bisexual. Drug abusers are usually heterosexuals. Female drug users often turn to prostitution and may spread the virus among their patrons and hence to their patrons' wives, other sexual partners, and offspring, although the degree of female-to-male communicability is still in dispute. The percentage of AIDS cases attributed to heterosexual behavior in the U.S., while still comparatively small, is rising. Furthermore, as of June 1, 1986, 345 cases of pediatric AIDS had been reported to the Centers for Disease Control, of which 82 percent had been diagnosed by the age of three.

The president of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences has noted that "Already, thousands of cases of AIDS in the United States are beginning to strain the capacity and deplete the resources of hospitals, physicians, nurses, and others in the cities hardest hit by the disease. A constantly increasing population of AIDS patients will severely burden the health-care system, including the components of science and education that underpin it." The Public Health Service estimates that in the year 1991 alone, direct health-care costs for AIDS patients in the U.S. are likely to be between $8 and $16 billion. This does not include the costs of medical care for those with AIDS-related complex and those who are asymptomatic carriers of the virus, each being a far larger group. Individually, care for AIDS patients from diagnosis to death normally costs between $50,000 and $150,000. These expenses are not primarily borne by homosexuals and drug abusers.

Mr. Gieringer also argues that sodomy statutes are overly broad, that they are directed not only to virus-spreading behavior but to contacts which do not have that effect. This is true but inevitable with any such proscription, and it is ordinarily not fatal to the validity of a statute unless the activity forbidden is proclaimed to be a fundamental right. To pursue the example which he uses, it is commonly thought wise—or at least constitutionally permissible—to punish the public discharge, carrying, or even possession of handguns, not only the using of them for homicide.

Maynard F. Thomson makes an observation which is respectable, if familiar, in academic commentary: the Constitution lacks textual support for the right-of-privacy decisions. I stated the same thing in my article, although in less extreme terms. Yet even had I been representing the State of Georgia in the *Hardwick* case, I would not have made such an argument to the Court. It has been consistently rejected in many cases decided during the last quarter of a century, and the Court has made it clear that it is unacceptable today. Unless an advocate has no aversion to malpractice, he must urge that his position is consistent with prior cases. The task of counsel for Georgia required, for example, that the abortion and other procreational liberty cases be distinguished from the sodomy situation, not grandly dismissed as illegitimate. Articulating concerns with respect to federalism was also an important component of the briefs filed by Georgia.

My own role as an *amicus curiae* was a more narrow one. It was predicated on intense concern that the public-health efforts to respond to the AIDS catastrophe not be impeded by a decision by the Supreme Court. For better or worse, the Supreme Court often acts as a super-legislature, pursuing a logic of consequences rather than mechanically deducing its conclusions from abstract premises. Even a year ago, when my brief was filed, detailed information relating to the epidemic was much less available in the general media than it is today. As the attorney who was representing Georgia had informed me that he did not intend to raise the AIDS problem, I felt that I should assemble accurate scientific information and relate it to the legal issues in *Hardwick* in a brief. That is what I attempted to do. I did not expect that the AIDS situation would be explicitly relied upon by the Court in its opinion. It is less difficult and controversial to write such documents in more conventional legalistic terms. Yet I felt that the epidemic might and should be seen as a powerful reason not to extend the right to privacy beyond the already-settled areas to protect sexual behavior which was causing the deaths of thousands of people.

In the abortion cases, the Court had considered the constitutionality of the statutes in light of the contemporary medical risks of the procedures. It did not confine its attention to the medical risks at the time the statutes were passed. My brief urged that it do the same in *Hardwick* as well.

James A. Webber's questioning of my motives is illustrative of the use of personal invective which has discouraged rational discussion of the AIDS tragedy, particularly in public and political forums. Although my motives are not relevant, let me attempt to assure him that my study of the AIDS epidemic antedated the decision of the Supreme Court to review *Hardwick*. My inquiry has focused on legal ramifications of the disease, not on homosexuality as such. "Autonomous hedonism," of course, threatens both heterosexuals and homosexuals.

As for Mr. Webber's assertion that public-health decisions should be left to the medical professionals, it must first be noted that these people are sharply divided in their opinions. More fundamentally, the public-health problem is only partly a medical one. It is also—as the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences has noted—a problem of allocating financial resources, of attempting to balance concerns about health needs against interests in individual liberties, and of politics. Many homosexual organizations have understandably sought to influence these decisions. Finally, in view of the absence of effective vaccines or curative therapies, efforts to respond to the epidemic must seek behavioral change, a matter which tends to transcend medical solutions.

I am grateful to Robert Carlen for sharing his knowledge of the role which politics has played in decisions of the American Public Health Association. Dr. Carlen's observations parallel those which I have received from other physicians. As Dr. Carlen also notes, the serious medical risks of sodomy are not limited to those associated with AIDS.

Conservatism

To the Editor of Commentary:

In their article, "Our Conservatism and Theirs" [October 1986], Brigitte Berger and Peter L. Berger define their own kind of conservatism as one that avoids the moral absolutism . . . which they associate with traditional conservatism. Most traditional conservatives, according to the Bergers, "view history as a decline from a past that was better

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than the present. . . ." The traditionalists believe that "at some point in the course of history, something went wrong and the present situation is the result of this catastrophe." . . .

The Bergers' conservatism, by contrast, justifies itself by appealing to a different understanding of history: history is neither a decline from a golden age nor a progress to a golden future, but "the successive disclosure, occultation, and rediscovery of moral insights." The moral stance based upon this understanding of history will be nobler than what the Bergers call "utilitarianism" or the " 'tinkering' attitude [involving] a readiness to experiment, to compromise, to look for 'what works' rather than for what is eternally true." But the Bergers' position will also be more sober than that of the traditionalists because it has absorbed the "key modern experience of relativity." This experience, say the Bergers, is "the awareness that all world views and value systems are contingent upon specific historical and social circumstances." Those who have passed through this experience may continue to adhere firmly to traditional values, but they will also be conscious of the fact that these beliefs are not givens, i.e., they are not principles that come to one ready-made, either by destiny or revelation, or any other non-human agency; rather, these values continue to be transmitted, that is, they form a tradition, because they have been *chosen*: "Modernization, at its very core, is a movement of the mind from destiny to choice." . . .

Despite their alleged insight into the relative status of "givens," the Bergers become suddenly uncritical about the given that characterizes their brand of conservatism, namely, the "experience of relativity." . . . They do not examine it to see whether the content of that experience is true or not: one does not know whether the Bergers believe that the experience of relativity is a profound insight or an illusion. . . .

In their own presentation of their views, the Bergers appeal . . . to Max Weber. Weber may very well have believed in the truth of the experience of relativity. He certainly taught that values can be justified only by reference to their having been chosen: in his view, no set of values is demonstrably superior to any other, from the point of view either of reason or of revelation. It is unclear whether the Bergers share Weber's opinion, an opinion that, in its implications, is indistinguishable from nihilism; but they do accept the truth of his distinction between an "ethic of responsibility" and an "ethic of absolute ends." The Bergers prefer the former over the latter, because it is more willing to compromise with the exigencies of political life, by giving "moral warrants to much more cautious approaches" to the solution of political problems .

According to the Bergers, an ethic of absolute ends will not, for example, permit one to favor "rapprochement between the United States and China *because of its consequences* for the much

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more threatening relationship with the Soviet Union" (emphasis added). The Bergers associate belief in tradition with inflexible absolutism, and . . . for this reason they are able to assert the superiority of the ethic of responsibility over the ethic of absolute ends. . . .

But . . . no empirical justification is offered to persuade one that the two kinds of ethics exist other than as ideal theoretical types. Nowhere do the Bergers argue that a belief in unchanging values makes prudent political action impossible. They merely assert that the ethic of absolute ends leads to an "almost instinctive procedure" of disregarding consequences . . . , whereas the ethic of responsibility always leads to actions that are "calculating, weighing . . . consequences, willing to compromise with the lesser evil. . . ." No matter the strength of one's fidelity to the discipline of sociology, one ought, for the sake of scientific impartiality, to avoid imputing real existence to distinctions that are only theoretical.

To revert to the Bergers' own example: one cannot fully understand the need for rapprochement with China on the basis of the *distinction* between the two kinds of ethic. If our relation with the Soviet Union is more threatening, it is partly because that relation reveals more clearly the absolute incompatibility of Communism and American democracy. The superior prudence of our compromise with China cannot be explained apart from a reference to absolutes. Indeed, it is just this reference that counsels such prudence.

The Bergers fail to consider the possibility of a traditionalism that does not orient itself by a belief in the existence of a golden age. This enables them to demonstrate the superior moderation of their own conservatism. They therefore strengthen the suspicion that the experience of relativity is merely a sanguine name for intellectual parochialism.

Both biblical religion and classical thought, despite their profound disagreements, taught the wisdom of tempering one's expectations of political life. That is, they both taught the virtue of political moderation, precisely because of their absolutism. It suffices to mention Plato's *Republic* and St. Augustine's *City of God*. Neither tradition understood itself in the simplemindedly historical way that the Bergers describe as a belief in a golden age. . . .

The Bergers set out to distinguish their conservatism from the opinions of other conservatives, and from liberals as well. Yet they seem rather to have demonstrated the extent to which they themselves, having assented to the experience of relativity, are the victims of an occultation of history.

SCOTT R. STRIPLING
Fort Washington, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Brigitte Berger and Peter L. Berger's taxonomy of contemporary conservatism is very well done, and has helped me understand why I am not a neoconservative. I think, however, that traditionalists will find as weak as I do the Bergers' defense of "tinkering" as the outcome of a moral philosophy. Some day, perhaps, they might consider studying the role of pragmatism . . . in the decline of American political and social life (and the role of sociologists in fostering this decline).

But the main weakness I find in the Bergers' presentation is their failure to recognize that they share with traditionalism the historicism that belongs to that camp. . . . The Bergers fault traditionalist troglodytes for being stuck in the 5th century B.C.E., or in the 13th century, or in the 19th, and for failing to change their values as history marched on. Supposedly those values should have changed as the times changed. . . . The Bergers, living in different times, with different values having been brought to the fore, think they have to adopt those new values. That is what being "modern" means to them.

But the heart of their philosophy is no different from that of many traditionalists: for both, value is derived from a particular set of historical circumstances. At the very least, the Bergers ought to feel constrained to justify their belief that the *present* set of circumstances is the one that should inform our actions. . . . By their own reasoning, rather than disdaining their academic colleagues for having embraced a set of "utopian lunacies," they should have joined them in the lunacy. . . .

But they chose not to do that—and on the basis of an absolute: freedom. That is incomprehensible, for the historicist theology that compels them to get in step with history in contradistinction to the traditionalists—those old fogeys—logically should also compel them to forgo any attempt to reach back to an earlier day for their values. Absolutism and tyranny, after all, while not an invention of the 20th century, are the distinguishing features of its political life. If that seems extravagant, take a look at the regimes currently sending representatives to the UN. The heyday of liberty was the 19th century. If the Bergers are so all-fired "modern," why are they harking back to an earlier age? . . .

Many traditionalists no doubt idolize the favorite institutions of this or that historical period, just as the Bergers do of the 19th century. But at least some of them are returning consciously to what they consider to be external values that they believe confer legitimacy on those institutions, just as the Bergers do with freedom. The real question to consider is whether a value like freedom is connected to and dependent on an objective and transcendent principle (Platonic or otherwise) or is merely a historically conditioned response to social stimuli. If the former, the Bergers will have to change their ideological stance. If the latter, how can they justify suspending their oh-so-modern relativism and hanging on to that anachronism? . . .

HERBERT SCHLOSSBERG
Eden Prairie, Minnesota

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Despite numerous interesting points, Brigitte Berger and Peter L. Berger's article is off-base in its characterization of traditionalists as wedded to political absolutes (in contrast to the "pragmatism" of neoconservatives).

No doubt, such a critique would apply to at least one traditionalist who has loomed large in the traditionalist-neoconservative fray —Stephen Tonsor—but that it does not reflect the consensus thinking of traditionalists can easily be shown by a quick glance at some of the leading traditionalist critics of neoconservatism. For example, M.E. Bradford, who as president of the Philadelphia Society organized that group's 1986 meeting which criticized neoconservatism, makes opposition to political abstractions the central focus of most of his writings. Paul Gottfried, a senior editor of *The World and I*, who has castigated neoconservatives as unreconstructed social democrats, is a self-proclaimed historicist. And

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Samuel T. Francis, who has criticized neoconservatism in the pages of *Chronicles, Modern Age*, and elsewhere, is a follower of the political realism of James Burnham. Not only are these traditionalists openly hostile to political absolutes, but this is the basis of one of their principal arguments against neoconservatism—that neoconservatives advocate such political abtractions as equality and global democracy.

STEPHEN J. SNIEGOSKI
Adelphi, Maryland

BRIGITTE BERGER and PETER L. BERGER write:

Scott R. Stripling believes that, for all our critical attitude toward tradition, we are uncritical of the "experience of relativity": in his opinion we should ask whether that experience is true, whether it is a profound insight or an illusion. Mr. Stripling is quite right to ask the question, but he is wrong about our attitude. The modern experience of relativity should indeed be systematically questioned, both in terms of its social grounding and in terms of its philosophical implications. We have argued, in various writings going back over twenty years, that sociology is a discipline that can serve very well to uncover the roots of modern relativity and, in doing this, to deprive it of its taken-for-granted status. Once one understands that modernity is one "social construction of reality" among many, one can then begin to "relativize the relativizers"—and, surprisingly, one can ask questions of truth in a fresh way. But to do this one must first undergo the experience.

We continue to think, *pace* Mr. Stripling, that most traditionalists regard the experience of relativity in and of itself as a symptom of cognitive pathology. We don't; we regard it as a perilous but potentially liberating challenge. And we continue to think that taking such an attitude toward modernity makes for a less absolutist ethics, a greater concern for empirical consequences as against fidelity to an unchanging table of values.

As for Max Weber, he was anything but nihilistic. Within the constraining circumstances of imperial Germany and the very first years of the Weimar republic, until his premature death, Weber was passionately committed to and active in promoting political purposes that one would call "classical liberal" today. He was also an agnostic and a deeply pessimistic human being, but this hardly makes him a nihilist.

Herbert Schlossberg charges us with believing that one must always adopt the values of one's time, but then, illogically, embracing freedom as an absolute. It is hard to see where he gets either idea from; it cannot be from the article he is responding to. If we believed that one should conform to currently fashionable values, we would be much more cheerful denizens of Left-liberal academia. We do indeed believe in freedom—not as an absolute, but as one of the morally and humanly precious achievements of the modern age. Nor do we canonize the 19th century; we simply acknowledge that it was the period when bourgeois civilization came to maturity. With all its flaws, and precisely as a *relative* achievement, that civilization continues to be the best bet for a decent society in this century.

We do not want to quarrel with Stephen J. Sniegoski about the positions of the writers he lists. No ideological camp in America is monolithic; the traditionalists are no exception. Again, though, we have no intention of making an absolute out of any of our own political agendas. We strongly believe that democracy is "global" in the sense that it is the best political system, not only for Western nations, but for any society that has gone through modernization. This is an empirical assessment, not the statement of a timeless truth. We have never had much use for the value of equality, except in the very precise sense this term has acquired in the vocabulary of liberal democracy.

All three respondents disagree with us not on account of the political values we espouse but on account of our (alleged) grounds for holding these values. It seems to us, indeed, that to a large extent here is precisely where traditionalists divide from neoconservatives. We would not underplay the importance of this philosophical difference; it is worth debating further. But we would reiterate our conviction that, in a moment when the survival of these shared values and of the institutions embodying them is in danger, people with different philosophical reasons for adhering to them should concentrate on their common allegiance and the political tasks resulting from it.

The Soviet Union

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Though I have the greatest respect for Vladimir Bukovsky and rate his book, *To Build a Castle*, as one of the classics of resistance literature, may I venture to disagree with his proposition ["Will Gorbachev Reform the Soviet Union?," September 1986] that Gorbachev has only three options in confronting his internal troubles? Besides the three which Mr. Bukovsky mentions (leaving things as they are, experimenting with some form of NEP, and relying on Western aid), there is a fourth, which I believe is currently being tried out: the decoupling of Western Europe from the United States, neutralizing its will to resist, and, having imposed Soviet domination, exploiting its technological and economic resources to compensate for the insufficiencies in the Soviet bloc.

Nothing is more likely to turn the West Europeans (who are not in Mr. Bukovsky's heroic mold) away from the Americans than the spectacle of a U.S. administration implementing a policy of all-out production of all the most advanced weapons, as he seems to recommend, in the hopes that, in ten or twenty years, the Soviet economy may falter and collapse. The ubiquitous implements of mass destruction dotted all over our unfortunate continent cannot be guaranteed against irrational use by desperate men in circumstances as impossible to predict as some of the events which have occurred in my own lifetime. Our aim must surely be to achieve balanced, verifiable reductions of arms, if indeed Soviet habits of secrecy make that possible. The only civilized solution is to strive to contain and win the struggle which the Soviets are waging against us by non-military means.

NORA BELOFF
London, England

VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY writes:

Nora Beloff does not disagree with me when she suggests that current Soviet strategy is aimed at decoupling Western Europe from the U.S., neutralizing it, and then exploiting its economic resources. This is precisely what I meant in my third option, détente, which has never been viewed by the Soviets as a "relaxation of class struggle," and is, moreover, the

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only form of "peaceful coexistence" possible with the Soviet regime. The essay from which my COMMENTARY article was adapted dealt at greater length with this problem in a discussion of Soviet foreign policy.

As for the less-than-heroic Europeans, I do not know whom Miss Beloff is referring to. If she means the hysterical crowds of the peace movement, their time has passed. Besides, she should know better than most that these people have never represented all Europeans, but only a small and noisy minority that exists in every country in the West. Indeed, if we were to take them seriously and permit them to dictate our foreign policy, Soviet domination of Western Europe would occur that much faster, since such people are simply instruments of the Soviet "struggle for peace."

Contrary to Miss Beloff's claim, it was a recent suggestion by the United States to *eliminate* nuclear weapons in Europe that worried Europeans, and prompted the leaders of France, Germany, and England to hurry to Washington to argue against such a move. Surely these Europeans represent the majority of their populations.

Frankly, I do not understand Miss Beloff's phrase about "balanced, verifiable reductions of arms," when right next to it she admits that "Soviet habits of secrecy" make this impossible. What then does she suggest? Should we deceive ourselves with yet another "balanced and verifiable" round of arms reductions and expose Europe to relentless Soviet blackmail, just to calm some supernervous Europeans? All of this, mind you, when Miss Beloff herself admits that the current Soviet goal is to dominate Western Europe after neutralizing it.

Even less clear to me is what she means when she says that the "only civilized solution" is to "contain and win the struggle" by non-military means. Is she really suggesting an active ideological war against the Soviets? I would be the last person on earth to disagree with this, but, alas, even Ronald Reagan has not ventured to proclaim it as a policy. All he did was to make one speech about the "evil empire," and multitudes of faint-hearted well-wishers persuaded him to stop. Besides, such a policy can be successful only if it is supplemented by tough military competition and an increasing challenge to the Soviet empire. But surely Miss Beloff would not advocate an aggressive ideological pressure on the Soviets while the West remains defenseless.

The South

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I enjoyed Joseph Epstein's "And That's What I Like About the South" [November 1986]. His descriptions of certain people still fit well once you get outside of the large cities down here. He gave me a few chuckles. However, I take exception to his regarding himself as a mountain in flat country, what with him being able to read and all, and exiled as he was during his Army hitch among so many illiterate peckerwoods. ". . . The kind of company I required was not available," quoth he.

These days, any number of us can read, just like Mr. Epstein, and I'm talking about big-time Yankee publications like COMMENTARY, which gets my full attention every month, just as soon as I finish *Soybean Journal*.

SCOTT WILLIAMS
Lawrenceville, Georgia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

At least one old soldier read Joseph Epstein's "And That's What I Like About the South" in a warm, roseate glow of nostalgia. . . .

As an eighteen-year-old trainee in a rifle company in 1945 at the Infantry Replacement Training Center at Camp Joseph T. Robinson, Arkansas, I visited Little Rock, about seven miles from the post, frequently and remember it fondly. . . .

The news of the dropping of the atomic bomb, which reached my company on a scorching 100-plus degree day on the rifle range, was greeted with unbridled jubilation. We all realized, instantly, that the invasion of the Japanese home islands, for which we had been training, would now be unnecessary. The tumultuous celebrations lasted for days.

The bridge over the Arkansas River, to which Mr. Epstein refers, is a walk I took many times. It led to North Little Rock and, oddly enough, to a hamlet called "Levy," which I have not been able to locate in any atlas or history.

It has been forty years since I left Little Rock (to report to Fort Bragg, North Carolina), and I sometimes think that I would like

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to go back and visit. But I don't know if I ever will.

WALTER MEYER
Brooklyn, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Let me pose a hypothetical question. Suppose a Christian author had occasion to attend a long series of Jewish religious services, and then to write about his reaction as follows: "Watching [the service] I felt a combination of pity, revulsion, and sheer admiration of craft [of money-making by the presiding rabbi]."

My question is: would COMMENTARY consider either this statement or the writer anti-Semitic . . . and would you refuse to publish it?

I would answer in the affirmative, and I would have thought COMMENTARY would agree with me. Nevertheless, this sentence appears in Joseph Epstein's article; his subject, of course, is not Jewish religious observance but that of Southern fundamentalist Christians.

Now I am neither Southern nor particularly fundamentalist, but I am Christian and I take offense at what Mr. Epstein has written. Revulsion, after all, is a strong word; so is pity. It seems to me that the innocent (Mr. Epstein would no doubt call it primitive) faith of these Christian worshippers deserves more respect than Mr. Epstein chose to render. . . . And the appearance of his statement in an issue containing a lead article denouncing anti-Semitism is particularly ironic. . . .

JOAN M. BERNOTT
Washington, D.C.

JOSEPH EPSTEIN writes:

In answer to Scott Williams's charming peckerwood letter, let me say merely that I do not believe I ever said Southerners were illiterate. All I said was that I found little in common with the men with whom I was in the Army in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Why do I believe that it will not do to answer Joan M. Bernott's letter by affirming that some of my best friends are Christians? I won't, therefore, attempt it. What I shall say instead is that the reason I felt the emotions of revulsion and pity was not for the quality of worship that I witnessed, but over the fact that these people, most of them obviously poor, were, I thought, being bilked by traveling revivalists whose first concern did not seem to me religious.

Peace Studies

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

While many observers are reduced to vague complaints about the academic world's leftward drift, Stephen H. Balch and Herbert I. London have performed a signal service in "The Tenured Left" [October 1986] by documenting its nature, extent, and the surprisingly candid expressions of intent among those working for the radicalization of the American university.

I would add two points. Messrs. Balch and London note how Tufts set the model for "peace studies" at the university level with the express aim of injecting the new orthodoxy into all academic fields and disciplines.

But a further step along these lines seems to have been achieved by the five-college consortium in the Amherst area of western Massachusetts (Amherst, Smith, Mt. Holyoke, Hampshire, and the University of Massachusetts). There academics and administrators keen to nullify the traditional purposes of higher education, instead of merely urging professors to teach their politics in class, hired as the first director of the Peace and World Security Studies program (PAWSS) not a person who could make the least claim to scholarly objectivity, but an individual named Michael Klare whose achievements ran essentially in the realm of left-wing organizing and radical activism. Thus the true purpose of the program was made manifest from the start with a baldness not observed elsewhere.

Among Klare's credits were helping to found NACLA (North American Congress on Latin America), a pro-Castro group whose periodicals publish long extracts from the Cuban dictator's speeches, routinely denounce the Peace Corps "and all other institutions of U.S. imperialism," and whose founding document says that NACLA seeks members "who not only favor revolutionary change in Latin America, but also take a revolutionary position toward their own society." Klare himself has regularly visited Cuba to give talks on the current state of American military preparedness. He helped found Mobilization for Survival, a coalition of some 36 "peace" groups of radical-Left complexion. A product of the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), Klare has published articles that include "Confront the Arms Merchants" for *WIN* magazine, in which he called on zealots to disrupt business conventions of defense contractors, and listed those upcoming.

It is Klare's full right as an American, of course, to work as a sympathizer for Communist Cuba, to support the cause of unilateral disarmament, and to blame the possibilities of war on American capitalism. One can even see the marginal interest of having such a person participate in political colloquia on university campuses—but to appoint him director of a five-college Peace and World Security Studies program?

The utter inappropriateness of such an appointment (unless we accept political indoctrination as a new function of higher education) became evident in short order to all but academic somnambulists. In his first interview with the local daily, Klare displayed his capacity for scholarly objectivity by denouncing Ronald Reagan for his "hostility, belligerence, and contempt" for the Soviet Union, and for advocating a policy of "peace through strength." Then, his bags scarcely unpacked (in a manner of speaking), he joined local "peace" activists in trying to stop the U.S. Air Force from building a low-cost antenna in the town of Amherst, part of the Ground Wave Emergency Network (GWEN) designed to maintain our command-and-control linkages, currently vulnerable to a blackout from a single high-atmosphere nuclear explosion by the Soviet Union. Such an explosion and resulting electromagnetic pulse could "blind" our military prior to a surprise Soviet nuclear attack, thus rendering our retaliatory response incapable of execution; even fervent opponents of SDI, such as Carl Sagan, Hans Bethe, etc., recommend making our command-and-control linkages more secure. Yet to the gathered representatives of Amherst, Klare used his new academic position to denounce GWEN as the scheme of mad generals raving to fight World War III, and even World War IV! At a hearing demanded by a pacifist county commissioner, Klare treated the Defense Department representative with open contempt, to the cheers of his newly acquired army of students wearing about their necks huge photographs of Hiroshima casualties with disfiguring flesh burns.

The more nominally academic

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activities organized by Klare's PAWSS program likewise amount to a theater for radical consciousness-raising, and at times descend to open strategy sessions of European and American pacifists, in pleasant surroundings and at college expense, to decide what next should be done to disarm the United States and NATO. Once in a grand while a centrist or even a conservative is invited to play a role which, given the deliberately structured situation and personnel, more closely approximates a revival of bear-baiting than a serious inquiry into the nature of peace and war. Nor does the PAWSS program see any impropriety in joining with radical student groups to sponsor events, the most recent being "Anti-Sovietism in the Media: An Obstacle to Peace" with Michael Parenti, a gala created by the Organization for Marxist Studies, the Radical Student Union, the Union of Palestinian Students, and the Venceremos Brigade (cane-cutting pilgrims for Fidel Castro).

Thus the step that Tufts initiated—urging the leftward indoctrination of students by professors under the umbrella of "peace studies," with encouragement toward political activism as a valuable element of "study"—finds its completion in the Amherst area by the five colleges choosing to appoint a professional radical to encamp his cause and organize the impressionable in the protected and subsidized precincts of academe. It is difficult to recall anything comparable in the history of the Western university.

This brings me to my second point. As Messrs. Balch and London rightly state, it is not the behavior of radicals that ought to surprise us in any of this. What is shocking, rather, is the attitude of complete complaisance shown by centrist liberals. We seem to be witnessing the academic equivalent of the Russian, Czech, and Nicaraguan revolutions: the Left drives inexorably toward its goal, while liberals meekly do nothing, or actually cooperate in the extinction of values they profess to hold dear.

At some juncture, with or without the efforts of Accuracy in Academia, the general public will begin to gauge the extent of what is nothing less than an intellectual and moral scandal, and may well demand action. History shows that legislatures are not the best instruments for bringing professors to their senses, and collateral damage can run high. The proper answer is for all members of the academic community (including alumni and hitherto pliant administrators) to begin reminding tenured faculty of their rightful function, and to protest the plainest effort to traduce the ideals of Western liberal education seen since Germany of the 1930's.

ANDRÉ RYERSON
Amherst, Massachusetts

Shcharansky

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Edward Alexander's vicious attack on the book *Anatoly and Avital Shcharansky: The Journey Home* ["Shcharansky's Secret," October 1986] is not only mean-spirited but also incompetent; I am amazed that COMMENTARY gave the book for "review" to a man who is unqualified to judge such a journalistic work. The book, which I edited and co-authored with seven other Jerusalem *Post* reporters, is not free of flaws, naturally. . . . But I do think that Mr. Alexander should have been frank with COMMENTARY, and said something like, "I have this insane hatred for journalists, and this obsession about the Jerusalem *Post*. I cannot in good conscience accept an assignment to review a book written by those secular leftist infidels."

In previous articles, Mr. Alexander has shown almost a compulsive need to attack various Jerusalem *Post* writers. Mr. Alexander is simply an ideologue (as, unfortunately, are many journalists), one who puts West Bank in quotation marks, defends the Jewish terrorist underground and Rabbi Kahane, and strikes out repeatedly at "liberal journalists" and the "jaundiced" Jerusalem *Post*. His cranky prose and frequent diatribes tell us more about him than about his subjects: in one article, he rants about "sweaty Jewish 'peace' groups and Conservative and Reform rabbis"; in another he lashes out at "this smelly little orthodoxy of leftist criminology,"

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and in his hatchet job in COMMENTARY, he advises readers of our book to approach it with "a generous supply of antiseptic soap." That sounds like a toilet-training problem, not criticism.

It is simply outrageous for this man not to mention any part of the book other than the chapter that offended him so much and one sentence from the preface. He found a place to mention his own heroic anti-Soviet efforts ("the present author, interrogated by Soviet authorities in December 1976 for carrying Jewish books into the USSR . . . ," blah blah blah). But not one word about our chapter on the diplomatic negotiations that led to Shcharansky's release —the first time this had been chronicled in depth. Not one word about the epilogue (a long report from Russia on the refuseniks, including the first in-depth interview with Ida Nudel). It is a major portion of the book, which has been reprinted around the world and praised by Ida Nudel, Shcharansky, Isaiah Berlin, and Martin Gilbert, who recently cited the articles on which the epilogue was based in front of an audience of 5,000 at Albert Hall. But this is small potatoes to Mr. Alexander, who is the kind of Jew more interested in *not* getting into the Soviet Union. (Yes, he proudly defended those Jewish books, and was therefore turned back. Upon his arrival in London, the AP, duly informed, photographed the indignant professor and his wife.) . . .

In a pompous lecture tone, he shows nothing but disdain for journalists. . . . Only we are so craven as to call the Rav Kook Institute in Jerusalem "Merkaz Harav Yeshiva," Mr. Alexander says. "The full name of the yeshiva in question is Merkaz Harav Kook. The name lopped off by the secularist zeal of the Jerusalem *Post* team is that of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook," blah blah blah. I understand that Mr. Alexander is a new immigrant to Israel, one who still divides his time between the U.S. and Israel. Perhaps when he is more familiar with the country, he will learn that religious and secular alike refer to the yeshiva as we did. I do not need Mr. Alexander to tell me who Rabbi Kook was—I spent four years on a biography of a prominent member of the Kook family. Nor do I appreciate the ignorance he displays in referring to all the Jerusalem *Post* writers as "secularists." Many members of the *Post* staff are observant—including one of the writers of the book. Others are probably as close to God as Mr. Alexander apparently is. There are lefists on the *Post*, and rightists, and people in the Center as well. It is an aspersion to cast them all as Bolshevik traitors to the Jewish people.

LOUIS RAPOPORT

Jerusalem, Israel

EDWARD ALEXANDER writes:

Only someone busily contemplating his own navel, and eager to inform the world that his scribblings have been "cited . . . in front of an audience of 5,000 at Albert Hall," could have mistaken my essay on Anatoly Shcharansky for a review of his book, to which I devoted three paragraphs. I restricted my remarks specifically to that section of the book by Mr. Rapoport and his colleagues which dealt, inadequately and foolishly, with the reception of Shcharansky in Israel.

I am sorry that Mr. Rapoport took these remarks as an occasion for the release of small, untidy, hitherto pent-up resentments, but also gratified that they spurred him to do a little research. Unfortunately, no amount of research will rescue a person from the snares laid by an unruly temper and the pitfalls that await those who cannot read English.

I offer as one representative example of Mr. Rapoport's acumen and probity his allegation that I have "defend[ed] the Jewish terrorist underground and Rabbi Kahane" and have "lashed out at 'this smelly little orthodoxy of leftist criminology.' " In the only article I have ever published about the Jewish underground, I wrote as follows: "The apologia for the underground resembles nothing so much as the liberal-Left justification of terrorist violence: everybody is guilty of the crime except the poor fellow who happens to commit it. . . . This smelly little orthodoxy of leftist criminology has now been adopted by the Jewish underground. According to old wisdom, extremes meet." That is how I defended the Jewish terrorists. Similarly, the only article I have ever written about Kahane contains not one single word in defense of him, and I challenge the loose-tongued Mr. Rapoport to prove otherwise. That article does contain many words of criticism of those at the opposite end of the political spectrum from Kahane who perversely chose to see good coming from his election in 1984.

I am not sure where Mr. Rapoport gets his idea of my "insane hatred" for journalists of the Jerusalem *Post*. The "evidence" he offers for this outlandish generalization sinks of its own inanition. I doubt, for example, that my reference to the "secularist zeal" of Mr. Rapoport's chapter on Shcharansky's arrival in Israel will be read by any rational person as "referring to all the Jerusalem *Post* writers as 'secularists.' " I would also be astounded if my allusion, in an article of 1984, to the "jaundiced eye" of the *Post*'s "West Bank" specialist were read by anyone who has retained the balance of his mind as a reference to "the 'jaundiced' Jerusalem *Post*." I have good friends on the Jerusalem *Post*; I have published several articles and reviews in its pages; I published in COMMENTARY in 1985 an article on Ethiopian Jewry that favorably cited two *Post* writers, one of them named Louis Rapoport. I have read work by David Krivine and Shmuel Katz and Wolf Blitzer and Yosef Goell with pleasure, profit, and even admiration.

But none of this is sufficient to satisfy Mr. Rapoport's idea of the unflinching loyalty and adoration due from *Post* readers to him and his colleagues. Indeed, the world of journalism is for him so much that Ursa Minor of all things visible that he actually appears to believe my wife and I traveled to the Soviet Union and artfully arranged to get ourselves interrogated for six hours and then locked up for nineteen just so we could get our pictures in the papers—perhaps in order one day to steal away some of the publicity rightfully owing to a fellow "cited . . . in front of an audience of 5,000 at Albert Hall"? Mr. Rapoport's self-fascination is such as to recall Trollope's portrait (in *The Warden*) of the journalist Tom Towers, "studiously trying to look like a man, but knowing within his breast that he was a god."

Randolph Bourne

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is not my intention to respond to reviews of my book, *The Lyrical Left: Randolph Bourne, Al-*

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fred Stieglitz, and the Origins of Cultural Radicalism in America, especially basically generous reviews such as Kenneth S. Lynn's [Books in Review, October 1986]. Although he finds fault with the "liberal" bees he believes buzz in my bonnet, he does not criticize my interpretation of the past. For that I am grateful. *The Lyrical Left* is a history of important ideas in American life, not a polemic or a parable.

But Mr. Lynn's cursory dismissal of Randolph Bourne's contribution to American letters should not go unchallenged, especially in COMMENTARY, which rests comfortably on one of the pillars Bourne established in American thought. Mr. Lynn writes that "there is a poignant thinness about [Bourne's] achievement." I disagree, and assume the editors and readers of COMMENTARY would disagree too if they were familiar with Bourne's work. Leave aside Bourne's trenchant critique of the limits of pragmatism, his concern, shared by President Eisenhower, that war and preparation for war pose a threat to free societies, and his abiding faith that education and culture help define America's promise (ideas which may indeed have little currency in the Reagan era), and consider only Bourne's belief that the United States, as he wrote in 1916, should not become a melting pot, but instead a "cosmopolitan federation" of cultural communities. One of those communities, Bourne believed, belonged to the Jews. In "The Jew and Trans-National America" he proposed that the United States become "a freely mingling society of peoples of very different racial and cultural antecedents, with a common political allegiance and common social ends but with free and distinctive cultural allegiances which may be placed anywhere in the world." In particular, long before the American Jewish Committee reached a similar conclusion, he praised American Jews' identification with Zion.

When Bourne outlined his cosmopolitan and pluralist vision of America, his was a very lonely voice. Theodore Roosevelt's view of 1915 that "there is no room in this country for hyphenated Americans" defined the overwhelming consensus of the day. As President Wilson put it, also in 1915, "America does not consist of groups." In 1986, Gore Vidal said essentially the same thing, but his voice, outside of the lunatic fringe, is as lonely as Bourne's once was.

I believe that Bourne's eloquent essays on pluralism in American life mark a substantial contribution to American thought. Like his essays on pragmatism, war and society, and education, they remain defensible, important, and vital. Randolph Bourne was "rediscovered" in the 60's and 70's because what he wrote retains its power and intelligence, not to mention its significance for magazines like COMMENTARY.

Mr. Lynn notes that Carl Resek's edition of Bourne's writings, *War and the Intellectuals*, is out of print. This is true, but other collections of his essays and letters can be bought, read, and savored. I daresay that if I, Mr. Lynn, and the editors of COMMENTARY together contribute half as much as Randolph Bourne did to American thought before he died at age thirty-two, we will have done well.

EDWARD ABRAHAMS
New York City

Military Reform

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

What a disappointment it was to read Alvin H. Bernstein's review of *America Can Win* by Gary Hart and William S. Lind [Books in Review, October 1986]. There is a case to be made against some of Senator Hart's ideas for Pentagon reform, but Mr. Bernstein, despite obvious knowledge and a serious mind, does not make it.

The review, in fact, seems more of an attempt to dismiss the book than refute it. Mr. Bernstein regularly misstates what Lind and Hart have written—always in a way calculated to make the authors appear silly.

Mr. Bernstein writes, "Hart and Lind foresee a scenario in which war breaks out in the Persian Gulf" between "one of our (unnamed) regional allies" and the Soviets, who are "no longer frightened by our nuclear arsenal"; the crisis escalates, and eventually we "begin pushing nuclear buttons." Well, not exactly. The section of the book to which Mr. Bernstein refers is merely posing a hypothetical case, not predicting or "foreseeing" such an event. Does Mr. Bernstein think this scenario, which he words in such a flippant way, completely implausible?

The pattern continues. Mr. Bernstein: "As the authors see it, . . . the Army misguidedly plans to fight a war of attrition." Actually, the Army has changed those plans, a development the authors note. Here is what page xi of Hart's introduction says: "In 1982, the Army sponsored a major conference on military reform at West Point. . . . That year the Army also adopted maneuver warfare as its doctrine."

In discussing other ideas presented by Hart and Lind, Mr. Bernstein writes: "Some of their prescriptions are old-hat, as when they insist on the need for unit cohesion." Well, so what? A lot of good ideas are old-hat.

Mr. Bernstein comments as follows on the book's call for a reformed mode of troop training and military thinking: "What, then, is their solution? Astonishingly, it is brainwashing." But the quotation Mr. Bernstein adduces hardly supports his use of the loaded word "brainwashing." All Hart and Lind propose is to imitate what a number of private companies have done to inculcate a sense of camaraderie and an understanding of common external goals.

Mr. Bernstein goes on to describe their proposal as "odious" and "alien," involving an "absurd utopia." Now, really. These ideas are already in practice, and at a number of factories in the United States. From Western auto plants to China, the whole world, as Jack Kemp noted in a recent article in the *Wall Street Journal*, seems to be moving toward a less bureaucratic, more freewheeling, goal-oriented mode of organization—the whole world, that is, except our Pentagon.

Mr. Bernstein might have said that such reshuffling, while a good thing, is likely to achieve only limited results. Or he might have pointed out that while chastising the bureaucratic nature of the Pentagon, Hart and others have often contributed to it—creating new central bureaucracies, stretching out the procurement of vital weapons, micromanaging everything from bombers to toilet seats, and favoring pork-barrel projects for their home districts. . . Instead, Mr. Bernstein heaps scorn on a rather modest idea.

Mr. Bernstein avers that the Soviets are "cutting submarine production" but cites no evidence for this assertion. There are many who believe the Soviets are not cutting

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submarine production. And even if Soviet production were slowing, this hardly refutes (as it seems designed to) Hart's arguments about the Soviet submarine threat. The Soviets now enjoy an advantage of three to one in attack submarines without further production. And their Navy has a more modest mission: the Soviet Union need only interrupt or frustrate free navigation to thwart our strategy of resupplying Europe.

Mr. Bernstein's central complaint, when you come right down to it, is that he wanted Gary Hart to write a book not on how to make our military more effective, but on where to send it. "Gary Hart *has* no strategy," Mr. Bernstein thumps. Actually, Gary Hart has what seems to be a clear strategy. He would use force almost nowhere—at least, nowhere where there has been a conflict in recent years (Grenada, Nicaragua, Angola, Mozambique, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Berlin, Lebanon, El Salvador, Afghanistan, Iran, Syria, and elsewhere). He might send aid to some resistance movements, albeit in amounts too small for them to prevail. And he might fight for Europe, though in the meantime he would reduce U.S. troop levels there. Hart believes we will have more influence by limiting our involvement to the fighting of poverty and the conduct of negotiations with the Soviet bloc.

To me, this strategy is bad, but it is on the record for anyone to criticize. Just read Hart's 1978 White Paper on defense, or any of dozens of speeches since. Outlining strategy, however, is not the purpose of this particular book, as Hart and Lind explicitly state: "Military reform does not seek to define a new national or military strategy." We may as well fault Hart for not proposing an educational-voucher system, or a way to make Social Security solvent. . . .

Mr. Bernstein writes that "the authors claim that the tactical and operational are what really matter." They don't say that, though. They just argue that discussion of effectiveness can take place while holding in abeyance strategic issues which, they admit, are also relevant.

To attempt to settle strategic questions prior to a discussion of tactics, as Mr. Bernstein seems to demand, would be just as arbitrary as to do the opposite. As the authors write: "Of course we need a sound, clear strategy . . . but most of the issues that affect whether or not our forces can win in combat on the tactical and operational levels"—note the limited context—"must be independent of strategy, because strategy is likely to change more rapidly than we can change our policies and practices in those other areas." Whether or not one agrees—it seems to me our strategy has been rather too slow to change in areas like strategic deterrence policy and the defense of Europe—it is not fair to suggest that Hart and Lind have swept aside strategy *a priori* as a matter of secondary importance.

Remember: Mr. Bernstein characterizes Hart and Lind not just as wrong, or mistaken, but as showing "a stunning lack of understanding" at best, or, at worst, as "willfully misrepresenting" others. Well, here's a misrepresentation. Mr. Bernstein: "[Hart and Lind] irresponsibly insinuate that the way to deal with the Soviets in Europe is through a surprise attack." I have read the book carefully and find no such insinuation. I do find clear and explicit statements that NATO should adopt a strategy of rapid *counterattack* should the Soviets ever launch a strike against our allies. They call, in other words, for a truly active defense—but one not based on attrition—similar in some ways to that advocated by President Reagan in his SDI program, or by Navy Secretary John Lehman in his plans to bottle up the Soviet Navy in its home ports.

To describe these doctrines as a "surprise attack" is, to me, to make debate more difficult. And that is the likely impact of Mr. Bernstein's review of a challenging, well-written case for military reform, *America Can Win.*

GREGORY A. FOSSEDAL
Hoover Institution
Stanford, California

ALVIN H. BERNSTEIN writes:

1. Do I find completely implausible the idea that an American administration would initiate a nuclear war in the Persian Gulf on behalf of some anonymous Persian Gulf ally? Yes, indeed I do.

2. Hart/Lind write that our defense problems cannot be solved "solely through the reforms discussed previously in this book." In the model they admire, the institution makes "a great effort to get its employees at every level to adopt . . . [its] *external* goals and purposes as their *personal* goals and values [emphasis in the original]. These goals and purposes are constantly *inculcated* [emphasis added] in everything the organization does, from starting the workday by singing the company song, through uniforms, . . ." etc. Mr. Fossedal does not think this amounts to brainwashing. I do.

3. For evidence that the Soviets are planning to decrease the number and increase the quality of their submarine force, I refer Mr. Fossedal to the relevant sections of James L. George's new collection of essays, *The Soviet and Other Communist Navies: The View from the Mid-1980's* (Naval Institute Press, 1986).

4. It should be self-evident why strategy must drive operations. The military performs the operations for which it prepares and cannot be expected to adapt at the wave of a wand to conditions unanticipated in its planning and training. That is why it is absurd to talk about military effectiveness outside the context that a national strategy establishes. In Vietnam, an army designed to be effective against the Soviets in Europe was set down in the jungles to fight guerrillas and special-operations forces. Because of the way it had been trained, equipped, and taught to think about combat, it developed tactics that could not produce victory. Mr. Fossedal should read Andrew Krepinevich's recent study, *The Army in Vietnam* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

5. The two examples of maneuver warfare that Hart/Lind produce for their readers are Germany's invasion of France in 1940 and Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, both surprise attacks. How would such tactics work for NATO in Europe against the forces of the Soviet Union?

Mr. Fossedal admits that he does not object to clichés; he does not seem to mind slogans and catchwords, either.

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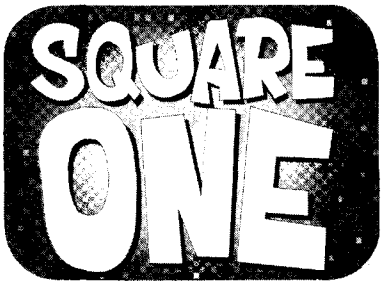

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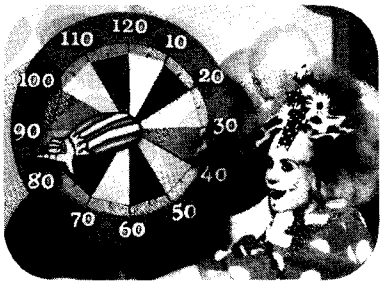

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Why the Soviets Want An Arms-Control Agreement, And Why They Want It Now

Eugene V. Rostow

In its potential significance, the Reykjavik summit can be compared to the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 among the Soviet-American confrontations since 1945. In both episodes, the Soviet Union sought to convert its nuclear power into a coercive political force. But the stakes at Reykjavik were, and remain, much higher than those of 1962. In 1962, Nikita Khrushchev was trying to obtain a quick but not decisive change in the Soviet-American nuclear balance and an American pledge not to throw Castro out. At Reykjavik, however, Mikhail Gorbachev pressed hard for a final showdown. What he demanded, behind the smokescreen of anti-nuclear pieties, was Western recognition of the Soviet Union's "right" to build a nuclear first-strike capacity, based on its formidable array of offensive nuclear weapons coupled with a monopoly in defensive systems. This objective has been the constant theme of the Soviet nuclear build-up and of its negotiating policy in the nuclear arms-control talks. There is no evidence since Reykjavik that this Soviet goal has been abandoned or even modified.

Gorbachev's brilliant preparations for the Iceland meeting, and his conduct of the talks, were a stunning demonstration of the methods of Soviet aggression in the bipolar nuclear environment of contemporary world politics. Gorbachev ambushed Ronald Reagan at Reykjavik, playing on political realities the President could not resist. And he broke a sacred rule of the Foreign Ministers' club, by not following the agenda which had been prepared by Secretary of State George Shultz and his Soviet opposite number Eduard Shevardnadze. To make the point unmistakable, he forced Reagan to swallow the Daniloff exchange. Of course Reagan refused to be mugged, a considerable achievement under the circumstances. But escaping from a Soviet trap is not in itself a triumph for American foreign policy.

Reykjavik also demonstrated once again how heavily the Soviet Union has come to rely on what Sun Tzu, the great Chinese philosopher of war, called the "indirect" methods of warfare, the psychological and political exploitation of latent military power. Sun Tzu, writing 2,500 years ago, said that such methods were the supreme expression of the military art, far more elegant and effective than crude bloodletting. Their goal is to destroy the enemy's will to resist, and thus to achieve victory without war.

Since deliberate open warfare against the United States is too risky so long as we retain a sufficient nuclear retaliatory capacity, the Soviet Union has only used more orthodox methods of warfare in areas like Afghanistan which it thinks we do not regard as vital to our national security. Against Western Europe, Japan, and a number of other countries protected by the American nuclear umbrella, it has relied—so far—mainly on the indirect methods of Sun Tzu. After all, the Soviet leadership does not want to inherit the great Western centers of economic power as smoking ruins, contaminated by radiation and poison gases.

For the Soviet leaders, who never forget that Red Army troops in large numbers surrendered to the Nazis as liberators in 1941 and helped the Hungarian revolutionaries in 1956, Sun Tzu's methods are also attractive for another reason. They cannot be sure that their European troops would fight the Western allies.

The Soviet Union has long believed that the most powerful modern weapon in its Sun Tzu arsenal would be a clear-cut Soviet first-strike nuclear capacity. The Soviet leaders have devoted a stupendous effort to achieving a nuclear force of that character. They are altogether correct in

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believing that an unequivocal Soviet first-strike capability would split and paralyze the West, inhibiting the possibility of any Western response, conventional or nuclear, to the indefinite expansion of Soviet power. No Western government wants to test the arcane calculations of a nuclear first-strike exercise in practice.

What the Soviet leaders think a clear-cut first-strike nuclear capability could accomplish for them was brought out in Gorbachev's interview with the Czech newspaper *Rude Pravo* on September 9, 1986. In the course of that interview, Gorbachev complained about many American defense activities since the Geneva summit in 1985. Among them he listed "bandit-style, strong-arm, neoglobalist action against Libya and Nicaragua." The term "neoglobalist" has suddenly become a staple of Soviet propaganda. It recalls the definition of détente offered by Gorbachev's patron and predecessor Yuri Andropov on August 4, 1978. In view of the nature of nuclear weapons and the state of the nuclear balance, Andropov said, détente between the Soviet Union and the Western nations was an obligation of humanity. And the model for détente, he went on, was the friendly and cooperative relation between the Soviet Union and Finland.

However one judges the wisdom, prudence, and effectiveness of recent American actions against Libya and Nicaragua, it is breathtaking for the Soviet Union to suggest that the United States is exceeding its proper role in world affairs by attempting to protect its security interests in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean. Thomas Jefferson and Theodore Roosevelt would not have been amused by the claim that the Mediterranean and the Caribbean are Soviet lakes.

The central problem, then, of world politics and of American national security remains what it has been since 1945: the Soviet program of indefinite expansion achieved by the aggressive use of force. The possibility of direct Soviet moves against Western Europe and Japan was contained and deterred during the Truman administration, and a Soviet nuclear threat against China was successfully met by Richard Nixon. In recent years, the most active part of the Soviet campaign of expansion has been directed against strategic targets in the Third World —targets of importance in outflanking and enveloping the major centers of power, the United States, its NATO allies, China, Japan, and a few other key countries.

The genteel vocabulary of Western diplomacy now labels Soviet attempts to exploit or exacerbate Third World conflicts as "regional problems." Reagan sought to have this issue placed on the agenda at Reykjavik. Gorbachev wanted to confine the Iceland summit to the intricacies of nuclear arms-control negotiation. On this, Gorbachev prevailed. Except for a few formal American comments for the record about regional conflicts and human rights, the Iceland summit was limited to the problem of nuclear arms control.

The tactical reason for the Soviet desire to make nuclear arms control the centerpiece of the Soviet-American dialogue is the Soviet belief that a nearly mystical faith in arms control has become the opiate of Western opinion in general and American opinion in particular. In this view, the Soviet tacticians are right.

An enthusiasm for arms-control and disarmament agreements is an integral feature of American culture. From the beginning, the American mind, largely shaped by Low Church Protestantism, has had a special faith in law as a shaping influence in the social process. The word "covenant" has great resonance in the American language. We take a keen interest in disarmament and arms-control treaties for the same reasons which led us to draft and adopt the Constitution and endow the Supreme Court with extraordinary power as its prophet. Thus the United States proposed an agreement demilitarizing the Great Lakes as early as 1783, and for over two centuries has been a vigorous advocate of international arbitration and many other initiatives in the same spirit. Our first reaction to the nuclear weapon after World War II was to propose the Baruch Plan, to be embodied in a treaty bringing all forms of nuclear energy under the control of an international agency, and prohibiting national nuclear forces, including our own, which were then a monopoly.

The American effort to obtain nuclear arms-control agreements slowed down after the Soviet Union rejected the Baruch Plan, but was revived and accelerated by the Cuban missile crisis, which we saw as a demonstration of the risks of nuclear uncertainty. Arms-control agreements, we thought, could help to bring some stability and predictability into the contentious rivalry of the great powers, and keep that rivalry from escalating into nuclear war.

With the steady expansion of Soviet power since the Cuban missile crisis, and the rising pressure of the Soviet military build-up, the traditional Western enthusiasm for arms-control agreements has become an obsession. In a mood which contains disturbing elements of hysteria, the people of the democracies are more and more attracted by the glitter of panaceas, and above all by the illusion that arms-control and disarmament agreements are assurances of peace, a ritual that could achieve peace without tears. That illusion was equally popular in the 1930's when Western governments kept pressing disarmament treaties on Hitler while Germany rearmed and began its career of conquest. The persistence of the view, despite the failures of arms-control efforts during the interwar period and the last twenty years, has offered the Soviet government a dazzling opportunity to divert attention from the real problems of Western security. The Soviet

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leadership has taken full advantage of this opportunity.

THUS the Soviet propaganda apparatus, led by Gorbachev himself, has been preaching the virtues of a moratorium on testing nuclear weapons, a comprehensive test ban, and a limited test-ban treaty confining nuclear testing both in number and in scale.

The movement for a moratorium on testing and a comprehensive test-ban treaty is a cruel and pathetic deception. Its unstated premise is that if tests are forbidden, the existing stock of nuclear weapons will die, and no new nuclear weapons could be made. Both parts of the premise are incorrect. No one knows how long existing nuclear weapons could be fired, but all are agreed that they will remain usable for many years. And new weapons modeled on existing weapons can be manufactured without further tests. But a moratorium or a comprehensive test ban would prevent the development of smaller, cleaner, and more accurate nuclear weapons, which would be less dangerous than existing weapons to the environment and to noncombatants. The United States has steadily replaced older weapons with such modern weapons and greatly cut the size of its nuclear arsenal in the process.

There was an informal test moratorium during the late 50's and early 60's which the Soviet Union broke without warning, leading President John F. Kennedy to remark that we should never make such an agreement again. During the moratorium period, many of the scientists working on the improvement of the American nuclear arsenal took more active jobs, and it required a number of years to restore the vitality of our laboratories. The Soviet Union has no such problems; its scientists do as they are told.

All the nuclear powers and many others are in fact against a test moratorium or a comprehensive test ban, although most of them give lip service to the idea. The United States has stubbornly persisted in opposing these projects and explaining why.

The ten-year-old Threshold Test Ban and Peaceful Nuclear Explosion Treaty, limiting the scale of underground nuclear tests, is another matter. Although the reports from Reykjavik do not coincide on the point, some American officials have said that the Soviet Union has accepted, others that it is ready to discuss, an American proposal on testing which it had previously rejected—a proposal to improve the verification provisions of the Threshold Test Ban Treaty and then ratify it. Such a step would not be a serious military burden, and it might reduce the irrational clamor for a comprehensive test ban. On the other hand, it might have the opposite effect.

Beyond the level of tactics and political theater, there is a weighty strategic reason for the Soviet Union's desire to limit the Soviet-American dialogue to nuclear arms-control issues. Even though a deliberate nuclear war among the nuclear powers is the least likely of possible scenarios for the future, the state of the nuclear balance is a critical and under many circumstances a decisive factor in determining the ability of these powers to use or threaten to use conventional force. The link between the nuclear balance and the use of conventional weapons was brought out dramatically in the Cuban missile crisis. In that confrontation, the Soviet Union retreated in the face of an American threat to invade Cuba with conventional forces. The threat was backed by a nuclear arsenal obviously capable of retaliation against the Soviet Union for any use of nuclear weapons against the United States. In 1962, the United States could have controlled the possible escalation of any conflict over Cuba, so that even a local use of conventional force by the Soviet Union would have been futile.

Soviet policy took this aspect of the Cuban missile crisis to heart. Soviet leaders perceived arms-control agreements as devices that could allow them to build a nuclear first-strike capability, and prevent the United States from matching such a capability. The Soviet Union has acted on that principle, transforming a nuclear force which was far behind that of the United States in 1962, and significantly inferior in 1972 (when the SALT I agreements were signed), to one which is larger than that of the United States in land-based ballistic missiles, and growing more rapidly than that of the United States in every other weapons category.

In its report of July 16, 1986, *Where We Stand on Arms Control*, the Committee on the Present Danger said:

> The Soviet negotiating pattern since 1969 . . . is consistent with only one hypothesis: that the Soviet objective in the negotiations is to obtain U.S. and Western acquiescence in a Soviet right to massive nuclear superiority, especially in land-based ballistic missiles. The 1972 Interim Agreement on Strategic Offensive Arms accepted a Soviet advantage in ICBM's, and the Soviet Union has been trying through arms control to get its superiority in ICBM warheads and throwweight recognized as a law of nature.

The consequences of an agreement based on the Soviet approach are described in these terms by the distinguished French expert, François de Rose:

> A disarming first-strike capacity of the land-based components of strategic forces would create a situation of permanent insecurity, no longer balanced by the certainty of retaliation at the same level. Under such circumstances, the victim state under threat would be faced with the choice between accepting defeat or resorting to a second strike at the risk of annihilation. . . .
>
> What Helmut Schmidt rightly called the "subliminal" political influence of such a first-

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strike capacity is already palpable both in Europe and in the United States. It arises from the present state of the Soviet-American nuclear balance because of the Soviet Union's heavy advantage in intercontinental and intermediate-range ground-based missiles.*

IN ICELAND, Gorbachev said that the Soviet Union would make no agreements limiting either intercontinental (ICBM) or intermediate-range (INF) offensive weapons unless the United States agreed to modifications in the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, and agreed also not to abrogate that treaty for a period of ten years. The purpose of these proposals, clearly, was to destroy the American Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program or confine it entirely to laboratory research. The United States rejected this and proposed signing agreements on strategic and intermediate-range offensive weapons as soon as such agreements became possible, although it did indicate that it might be willing not to abrogate the ABM Treaty for ten years as part of a larger package.

In response, apparently, to Soviet arguments about the first-strike implications of a successful American SDI program, the United States advanced a dramatic proposal to abolish all long-range and intermediate-range ballistic missiles by 1996, in two distinct stages. During the first five years, there would be an approximately 50-percent cut in all strategic forces to equal levels of 1,600 delivery vehicles (including bombers) for each side, carrying no more than 6,000 warheads. A sublimit would substantially reduce the present Soviet lead in ground-based intercontinental ballistic-missile warheads, specifically including the Soviet "heavy" missile systems which were not affected by the 1972 SALT I agreements and have been sacrosanct ever since. During the second five years contemplated by the American proposal, all remaining ground-based and submarine-based strategic ballistic missiles would be eliminated.

The Soviet counterproposal appeared to raise the President's bid. It called for the destruction of all remaining strategic forces during the second five-year period: that is, it would eliminate bombers as well as missiles. The question of sea-launched cruise missiles would be taken up during the next round of negotiations; air-launched cruise missiles would be counted as one warhead each; and bombers carrying bombs or cruise missiles would count as strategic nuclear-delivery vehicles for purposes of the first five-year stage.

The issue of reducing and restructuring long-range nuclear forces was matched by proposals and counterproposals for an agreement on intermediate-range forces, which include both ground-based ballistic missiles and ground-based cruise missiles capable of being fired from the Soviet Union to reach targets in Europe, the Middle East, Canada, Japan, China, and smaller Northeast Asian countries, but—except for Alaska and the Pacific Northwest—not the United States. The final position at Reykjavik both for the Soviet Union and the United States was that there be no intermediate-range weapons in Europe and parts of western Siberia from which European targets could be reached by such weapons, and that the Soviets could have 100 intermediate-range warheads in the Far Eastern part of the Soviet Union, matched by 100 such warheads on U.S. territory. The parties discussed the question of limits on shorter-range Soviet ballistic missiles which threaten targets in Western Europe, China, and the Middle East, but did not even come close to agreement on this subject, despite its obvious relevance. They did, however, agree to negotiate on the problem six months after an INF agreement was signed.†

The pattern that emerges from the reports about the Iceland conversations, then, can be summarized in these terms: both sides seemed to favor deep cuts in strategic and intermediate-range offensive weapons. The United States favored reductions that would achieve deterrent equality for each side, measured by the number of warheads and their destructive capacity. The Soviet position on this crucial issue remains equivocal.** The Soviet Union sought to stop the American program for developing defenses against nuclear weapons; this was also one of its principal goals in the 1972 SALT I negotiations which produced the ABM Treaty and the five-year Interim Agreement Limiting Strategic Offensive Weapons.

NOMINALLY, the Soviet-American argument over SDI involves the interpretation of the ABM Treaty of 1972. Thus far,

* "Beware the Loss of Fear," *Atlantic Community Quarterly*, Spring 1986.

† Since Reykjavik, there have been strong suggestions from Europe, Japan, and the United States that an INF solution providing for small equal limits on each side for Europe and the Far East would be preferable to the original American zero-zero position at Reykjavik, or the compromise position finally reached.

** Since the summit, Gorbachev has indicated that the Soviet position still is to support equal reductions, not reductions to equal levels. For example, in his televised speech of October 14, 1986, Gorbachev said: "Let us reduce [the weapons of all three parts of the nuclear triad] by 50 percent, then we don't have to talk about levels, we don't have to talk about sublevels. We don't have to talk about numbers. Just reduce all three types by 50 percent." This is an old Soviet formula for avoiding an agreed data base and convincing verification procedures. It has created nothing but doubt and mistrust over the years both in the nuclear-arms negotiations and in the endless Vienna talks about conventional force levels on the central front in Europe. Such arrangements would do more harm than good. Where the Soviet Union is ahead—and it is far ahead in some of the most important categories of nuclear weapons—equal reductions would of course increase its lead. In any case, despite Gorbachev's October speech, on November 7, 1986 the Soviets tabled the position at Geneva based on the Reykjavik formula of 1,600 launchers and 6,000 warheads for strategic weapons.

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the argument has generated more heat than light. Article V of the treaty bans all ABM systems except for the land-based systems specified in the treaty—one for each side, defending either its capital or a missile site. The Soviet Union has an elaborate defensive system for Moscow, which is now being extensively modernized; the United States has abandoned efforts to defend its ICBM missile site in North Dakota.

The issue in contention is whether the ban of Article V of the ABM Treaty applies only to defensive systems based on technologies known at the time the treaty was signed or whether it applies to future systems based on other technologies as well. The U.S. in 1972 sought to have the treaty prohibit defensive systems based on future as well as known technologies, but the Soviet Union refused, pointing out that it was not possible to legislate in advance about the application of technologies whose potentialities were completely unknown. As a result, Agreed Statement D was appended to the treaty, providing that "in the event ABM systems based on other physical principles . . . are created in the future, specific limitations on such systems and their components would be subject to discussion." John B. Rhinelander, then counsel to the American SALT delegation, wrote in 1973 that "the treaty prohibits the deployment (but not the development or testing) of 'future' ABM systems based on components capable of substituting for ABM missiles, launchers, or radars."* In short, as the Committee on the Present Danger concludes:

> The development and testing of defensive systems based on new technologies is entirely consistent with the ABM Treaty, which carefully provided that the implications of such developments should be discussed by the two countries before they were deployed to see whether new agreements about such weapons or amendments to the ABM Treaty were desirable.

After the treaty was signed, however, some American officials treated the issue as if the Soviets had accepted the original American view and Agreed Statement D were mere surplusage. The Soviet Union remained silent on the subject, but actively pursued research and development on space activities generally, and in particular on defensive systems based on "other physical principles." The result is a Soviet lead in space technology which has been characterized as "almost frightening" by Jane's Research Organization in London. The same group has found that the Soviet Union is ten years ahead of the United States in the development of missile defenses. Other studies reach similar conclusions.

Thus, killing America's SDI program would at a stroke give the Soviet Union the possibility of developing an impregnable first-strike capacity. For, obviously, if one side were to have even a partial defense against nuclear weapons, and the other side none, the nuclear equation would be decisively changed even if each side had the same arsenal of offensive weapons. (This is why separate agreements on the several classes of nuclear weapons and defense systems would be unwise.)

Both at home and abroad, opinion is recovering from the first shock of SDI's emergence as a central issue in arms-control negotiations, and coming to realize that the United States had no choice but to undertake an enlarged program of defense against nuclear weapons. The West could not leave the field to the Soviet Union. Opinion is also coming to realize that even moderately effective Western defensive systems could offset the formidable and growing Soviet lead in ground-based ballistic missiles, and thus deny the Soviet Union the first-strike capability it has been trying so hard and so long to achieve.

It is equally apparent that defensive systems could be useful against the shorter-range ballistic missiles not yet dealt with in the nuclear-arms negotiations. The Soviet Union is deploying such weapons on an increasing scale and even providing them to client states like Syria and Libya. Furthermore, there is a serious trend toward the development of relatively short-range ballistic missiles by other industrialized Third World nations.

So far as INF is concerned, the issue is more political than military. From the point of view of security, indeed, there is no INF problem. Soviet intercontinental weapons can be fired at targets in Western Europe, Japan, or the Middle East as well as in the United States. But the development of Soviet intermediate-range weapons has immense political significance. It is a most effective device to put political pressure on Western Europe, China, and Japan at a time when the change in the Soviet-American intercontinental-weapons balance is increasing doubt about the credibility of the American nuclear guarantee.

The United States undertook separate INF negotiations in 1981 when the Soviet Union had a monopoly of intermediate-range ground-based missiles. The "zero option," abolishing all intermediate-range nuclear weapons for both sides, or an agreement giving each side the same right to deploy a small number of such weapons, always had "decoupling" implications for the relationship between the United States and Western Europe, on the one hand, and between the United States and its Asian allies and associates on the other. Nonetheless, in 1981 and 1982 the United States continued to support the zero option, which had been suggested originally by the then Chancellor of West Germany, Helmut Schmidt, because of the contribution it could make to redressing the overall nuclear balance. The zero option was opposed by the Soviets then, as they opposed all compromise proposals for reduction

* "An Overview of SALT," *American Journal of International Law Proceedings*, November 1973.

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to equal levels, but at Reykjavik Gorbachev seemed to favor it—for Europe only. Yet the zero option only for Europe would have unfavorable political consequences, dividing our Asian from our European allies.

EVEN more than the zero option for INF, however, the most spectacular idea broached in Reykjavik—the American proposal to abolish offensive ballistic missiles entirely within a ten-year period—demonstrates how the addiction to arms control can lead us into a Soviet trap.

There are conflicting reports about the genesis of this proposal. Some attribute it to a letter Reagan sent to Gorbachev in July 1986, and others to a note passed by Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle to Secretary of State George Shultz during a meeting at Reykjavik. Both reports are correct.

There is some conflict also about exactly what the United States proposed. In his statement before the First Committee of the UN General Assembly on October 20, 1986, Kenneth Adelman, the director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), said that under our offer "both sides would begin over a five-year period a reduction of all strategic nuclear arms—bombers, air-launched cruise missiles, intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and the weapons they carry. The weapons would be reduced 50 percent in this five-year period. During the next five years, we would continue to eliminate all remaining offensive ballistic missiles of whatever range," and continue with the development and testing of defensive weapons, in accordance with the ABM Treaty.

The American proposal for a 50-percent reduction during the first five-year period is based on the same approach as the proposals we advanced in November 1985 and February 1986, and seems to be subject to the same criticism which was made in July 1986 by the Committee on the Present Danger:

> The administration's revised formula would fail in its primary objective. It would not eliminate the Soviet Union's first-strike capability, or even reduce it much. It would, however, severely diminish the capabilities of all three strategic-force components of the U.S. triad, leaving the United States with a greatly diminished deterrent capacity. The most severe cuts would be made in the most survivable element of U.S. strategic forces, and the one with the most warheads—the sea-based deterrent. . . .
>
> Soviet forces could absorb similar cuts in deployed strategic ballistic missile systems—especially in ICBM's—with lesser impact as a result of the Soviet advantage in "cold-launch" techniques (which allow launchers to be reused), the thousands of non-deployed ballistic missiles in the Soviet inventory, and the lack of any U.S. ballistic-missile defense. Against a greatly diminished U.S. target base, such a Soviet force would serve as an ominous reserve.

That criticism could be met by a sharp but not a 50-percent reduction of strategic nuclear weapons, including ballistic missiles, to equal levels, defined in terms both of warheads and their destructive capacity, and in terms of the throwweight of missiles, rather than (as in the past) the number of launchers.

It is, however, impossible to discern any convincing rationale for completely eliminating ballistic missiles during the second five years of such an agreement, even if the formidable problem of monitoring compliance could be solved.

In the first place, abolishing ballistic missiles completely is a chimera. The same physical principles are applied to launch satellites, nuclear weapons, and space vehicles. Knowledge of the relevant technology is spreading rapidly. And many countries, large and small, now possess the capacity to make ballistic missiles.

Secondly, an agreement to abolish ballistic missiles would violate the prudent policy of maintaining the "triad" in our nuclear-weapons program—the policy of developing land-based, sea-based, and air-based weapons. That policy is required by the possibility that technology might suddenly make one or another class of weapons obsolete, or partially obsolete. The maxim about not putting too many eggs in one basket remains sound. And the chances for inducing the Soviet Union to give up its policy of expansion in the near future are surely not great. If we try to anticipate the longer future, other predator nations may appear, and bid for hegemony in their turn. And there is always the risk that an irrational political leader may acquire nuclear weapons.

All that being the case, we shall continue to need a deterrent retaliatory nuclear capacity for as far ahead as we can see. The force behind deterrence will also need to be as strong and flexible as possible. Existing and prospective Soviet defensive systems can stop some of our bombers and cruise missiles, which are slow and vulnerable. Soviet defenses against ballistic missiles are not yet nearly so effective. Ballistic missiles are therefore indispensable to the fulfillment of our nuclear strategy.

Some administration spokesmen have said that the United States has proposed to eliminate ballistic missiles as a class because they are the only weapons now capable of a first strike. This is surely an error. Against a non-nuclear power or an inferior nuclear power, any system for carrying a nuclear weapon is capable of executing a first strike. The only nuclear weapons thus far used in war, after all, were carried by bombers. Beyond a certain technological threshold, the principal distinction between first-strike and retaliatory weapons is their number and quality.

It is of course true that ballistic missiles are still

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the most accurate, speedy, and destructive nuclear-weapon carriers, and the ones least vulnerable to defense. But their capacity to execute a first strike depends upon their number in relation to the types of targets to be attacked, the enemy's defenses, and the opposing forces capable of a response.

Manifestly it is also correct, as Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger pointed out in a speech on November 17, 1986, that while all nuclear weapons threaten massive destruction, only offensive ballistic missiles "threaten to overwhelm us in the blink of an eye." Therefore they should, as he said, "be at the core of arms-reduction agreements." It does not follow, however, that they can be dispensed with altogether.

IT IS widely assumed that we could protect our security effectively with conventional forces if nuclear forces were radically reduced or even if all nuclear weapons were eliminated. In that form, the familiar assumption is untenable. Two reasons compel the conclusion that we shall be dependent indefinitely on the threat of effective nuclear retaliation to deter nuclear or conventional-force attacks on ourselves, our allies, and other vital interests around the world. The first is that for a variety of reasons the West cannot match the Soviet Union and its allies in conventional forces in all the relevant theaters where the Soviet Union is operating or may strike. The second is that we shall have to retain a fully effective nuclear retaliatory capacity because we can never be sure that the Soviet Union will not make an attack "with all weapons"—that is, with nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons—despite possible reductions in its nuclear forces and a possible "no-first-use" pledge. Former Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara made the point emphatically when proposing that the United States adopt a no-first-use policy in 1984. We should have to maintain a nuclear retaliatory capacity, he said, because we could never be confident that the Soviet Union would honor its own no-first-use pledge.

A certain number of Americans who advocate the total abolition of ballistic missiles, like some of those who favor the American proposal to abolish mobile missiles, intend only to make a propaganda gesture. They meet criticisms of the proposal by assuring their critics that the Soviet Union will reject it, so there is nothing to worry about. There can be no worse ground for supporting a policy, as Gorbachev demonstrated at Reykjavik, where he leapfrogged the American proposal to abolish ballistic missiles, without accepting it, by proposing to abolish all strategic nuclear weapons and then all nuclear weapons.

There are also many Congressmen and other Americans who believe that in the end we have enough nuclear weapons to deter an attack on the United States itself, and that protecting our interests abroad does not really matter. Yet as the experience of the Cuban missile crisis shows, the deterrence of attacks on the United States requires exactly the same measure of American nuclear retaliatory capacity as the deterrence of attacks on American allies and other interests abroad. Moreover, the United States would be unable to protect its liberty if the Soviet Union gained control of Western Europe, China, and Japan.

The same reasoning applies to the American proposal to abolish mobile land-based ballistic missiles. That proposal, now several years old, is apparently still on the table in Geneva. Yet small, mobile, land-based missiles—the Midgetman, now in development—could be an important contribution to the essential task of restoring the nuclear balance. The Midgetman missile would make our ICBM force less vulnerable, and thus reduce the pressures for a "launch-on-warning" policy. And it would make it easier to maintain an effective nuclear deterrent.

Though Midgetman was urged as a necessity by the Scowcroft Commission appointed by President Reagan himself, it seems clear that the reason he later proposed to abolish it is that the administration despaired of persuading Congress to authorize small mobile missiles after it had killed the plan for deploying the large MX missiles in Nevada. Nevertheless, from the strategic point of view, Midgetman remains a sound idea.

AS FOR the dream of eliminating nuclear weapons altogether, all American Presidents since Truman have declared their support in principle for ultimate abolition, and as Soviet spokesmen point out, Gorbachev's call for it again at Reykjavik revives a plan Andrei Gromyko tabled in 1946. At that time, the Soviet plan was dismissed by the West as transparent propaganda, and has been similarly treated at intervals since 1946 when the Soviet Union brought it back in one form or another. In all these forms the Soviet proposals have invariably depended on national rather than international action, with minimal arrangements for the verification of compliance. But of course without complete confidence in the enforcement of compliance, such a treaty would be a trap for the obedient. By hiding 100 weapons in a cave, a treaty violator could emerge as the overlord of world politics.

But the debate about alternative plans for nuclear abolition is irrelevant. A non-nuclear world can never be restored. Any moderately industrialized country can make nuclear weapons, and any rich country can buy them. Thus the West will always need some nuclear weapons against the chance that a strong hostile power or a state under the control of an irrational leader will obtain them. The Reagan administration is urging defensive systems as an answer to the possibility of such cheating. But SDI can never be more than a partial answer. What if the attack is made or

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threatened against an American ally which does not have an effective defense against nuclear weapons?

Even if a non-nuclear world could be imagined, would it be in the interest of the United States to help achieve it? If the American nuclear deterrent were to be removed, could anything prevent the Soviet Union from working its will by the use of conventional forces or the threat to use them?

Recognizing that the answer to this question is no, many in Europe, the United States, and Canada nevertheless imagine that they could live as autonomous islands of peace in a world otherwise dominated by Soviet power. This idea is a suicidal illusion. The Western powers, along with China, have too much specific gravity to be allowed to flourish indefinitely as neutrals in a world order dominated by the Soviet Union. The Soviet leaders would calculate that the Western powers might, after all, wake up with a roar some morning and change their minds.

WHEN, more than a decade ago, Henry Kissinger spoke tentatively about the "linkage" between nuclear arms-control efforts and Soviet expansion, he was denounced for placing impossible obstacles in the path of peace. His critics said that we must understand and accept Soviet expansion as a fact of life. They advanced a number of theories to justify Soviet international behavior. The aggressive use of force, some suggested, was the prerogative of a great power seeking status, recognition, and legitimacy. Alternatively, other critics explained, the Soviet drive for power was a defensive symptom of nearly paranoid suspicion or the manifestation of an inferiority complex.

Since the Soviet Union will not give up its imperial mission, Kissinger's critics concluded, we in the West must make sure that our more and more limited efforts at containment do not explode into nuclear war. At a minimum, they urged, nuclear arms-control agreements are useful ways to stabilize the inevitable competition between the two superpowers, rules of the game that could at least keep them from going over the precipice. Some went so far as to suggest that arms-control agreements could do more—that they would of themselves produce peace, and were in effect a substitute for the harsh and costly burden of having a foreign policy at all. "Linkage" became an idea politicians and bureaucrats avoided, and scholars and journalists ignored.

But the startling beams of light which pierced the fog of Reykjavik reveal once more that linkage is a reality which cannot be evaded or exorcised. Arms-control agreements, after all, are a means to an end, not an end in themselves. For the West that end can only be the goal of peace: a pluralist world order of independent states, based on a balance of power and generally governed by the rules of international behavior set out in the United Nations Charter. The end sought by the Soviet Union is altogether different. The Soviet Union is not trying to establish a balance of world power but to escape from its restraints. It is steadily building an alternative state system based not on equilibrium but on Soviet dominance—a true Pax Sovietica. The nuclear weapon is and will remain a key factor in the continuing struggle between these rival conceptions of world public order: for the West, the ultimate deterrent of Soviet expansion; for the Soviets, the ultimate deterrent of any Western defense against their own expansionist moves.

What is also clear from Reykjavik, finally, is that Soviet foreign policy under Gorbachev has ceased to be patient and long term. Gorbachev wants answers now. Taught to believe that the correlation of military forces will determine the future of world politics, Gorbachev is demanding that the United States draw the obvious conclusion from the fact that the Soviet Union is a sronger military power than the United States, and that its military strength is growing more rapidly than ours, despite our rearmament efforts of the last ten years. Gorbachev knows as well as we do that the Bolshevik Revolution has failed economically, socially, politically, and ideologically. He knows that the government of the Soviet Union has sacrificed the standard of living of two generations of its people in order to gain great military power. He knows that it is now on the verge of achieving overwhelming strength, and the momentum to generate much more strength, especially in its nuclear arsenal and its command of outer space. He is determined to utilize this military superiority before it evaporates. Thus his violent rush to intimidate Reagan at Reykjavik.

In concentrating almost entirely on arms control to the virtual exclusion of the issue of Soviet aggression, and in flirting with proposals that would give the Soviets a clear-cut first-strike capability, the Iceland meeting left the world with a single question: is the West still "containing" the expansion of Soviet power, or is the Soviet Union "containing" (and dividing) the industrialized democracies, steadily forcing them into a narrowing perimeter by the pressure of nuclear blackmail?

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My Mother's Conversion

Dan Vittorio Segre

MY MOTHER, born Jewish, is buried in a Christian cemetery. In her case, destiny really seems to have played tricks with our family. True, she loved to travel, yet nobody could have imagined that after having provoked such dismay by her conversion to Christianity in reaction to my departure from Italy for Palestine in 1939, she would become the first member of our family in two thousand years to go and die—as is the custom among pious Jews—in the Holy Land.

My mother rests in the small cemetery of the nuns at Ein Kerem, the meeting place of Mary and Elizabeth. She is buried in the shadow of tall cypresses in a square of ground surrounded by high walls, which naturally invite one to raise one's eyes to the sky. Wild geraniums and lazy lizards follow the sun's rays around the stone that covers her body and that is slowly sinking into the earth. The smell of rosemary always reminds me of the black square beneath which Albert Camus lies in a little Provençal cemetery. "The Motherland," he wrote, "is the land which covers the bones of one's ancestors." If this is true, I have, thanks to my Christian mother, planted roots in my Jewish ancestral land, though fifty years of active life there have not succeeded in making me feel it is mine.

Be that as it may, nobody would have imagined such an ending for my mother who, at the beginning of the century, was not only one of the most beautiful Jewish girls in Piedmont and its capital city, Turin, but also one of the most sought-after in marriage. In the miniature painted on the occasion of her marriage she looks like a fairy: the mass of brown hair combed up in the fashion of the time crowning the perfect oval of her face; the long neck, adorned with three rows of pearls falling over the laced bodice; the long, white, manicured hand catching them with the gentle gesture of a palm already destined to play with a rosary. There is another picture showing her in all her beauty dressed in a Japanese kimono. It was taken on the eve of World War I, in the small trellised pavilion in the garden of our country home.

Today, no one could imagine the past splendor of our house, with its rooms now empty of furniture, smelling of mold, and invaded by woodworm, which has eaten the gilded reliefs of the door frames and the wood of the old window sashes. Yet many years before I was born, the bishops of Cuneo and Alba used to converse, in the hospitable atmosphere offered by the Jewish mayor of the village, with the count of Mirafiore, offspring of the morganatic marriage of Victor Emmanuel II, the first king of united Italy (1861-78). On other, less official occasions, when the notables of the area gathered in these salons to talk about wine, cattle, and the fight against *phylloxera* (the American pest that was ruining their vineyards), it was my mother who set the tone of the meetings, playing the spinet and inviting some guest to exhibit his singing talents.

Yet my mother hated the country life she was forced to live after her marriage. She did not share my father's passion for riding and hunting; she found no interest in the conversation of the local gentry, even less in political discussions. She was not even excited by such extraordinary events as the arrival in Asti of the Buffalo Bill Circus or by Colonel Cody's invitation to my father to race his horses against ours. She was bored to death in the gilded cage in which my father had imprisoned her. Childless for over ten years, she envied her more fortunate friends who could enjoy the amusements of Turin's society life, still gravitating, as it did at the time, around many members of the royal family.

The Jews of Piedmont had emerged from the ghetto only recently: my great-grandfather on my father's side had grown up in the ghetto of Ivrea, on my mother's side, in that of Turin. They did not belong to the families that had distinguished themselves in the wars of the Italian Risorgimento—the 19th-century movement for Italian political unity—but they had fought for their emancipation and were fiercely faithful to the House of Savoy which, in 1848, had granted them civic equality. In the thirty years that followed they had forgotten most of the rites and values of their ancestral faith. My grandfathers were already unable to read Hebrew, still a language of current

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knowledge in the preceding generation. My maternal grandmother used to recite her daily prayers in a shortened form without understanding their meaning; for over seventy years she apparently recited in Hebrew the morning blessing in which a Jew thanks the Lord "Who did not make me a woman."

Italian Jewry at the time suffered from the effects of emancipation for reasons common to other European Jews but also quite particular to Italy. First of all there was the question of numbers. The Italian Jewish population at the end of the last century was slightly over 30,000, one-tenth of the Jewish population of France and less than a fraction of the Jewry of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Italy did not have—and to a certain extent still does not have—a capital city like Paris, London, or Vienna polarizing the intellectual, political, and economic establishment. In these metropolises, Jews had become numerous and rich enough to carry out the responsibilities of modern, communal religious institutions. In Italy, Jews had remained for centuries scattered all over the peninsula in small communities that at times were no more than a dozen families strong. From these Italian villages or country towns they had taken their new names when the state authorities required them to drop their old Jewish patronymics: Moses, son of Jacob or of David, became Alatri, Orvieto, Sermoneta, Padua, or Pavia.

The "universities," as the Jewish communities were called, had developed, in the separateness of the ghettos and notwithstanding the outwardly miserable appearance of their members, strong cultural traditions in the fields of music and art unparalleled by any other European Jewish community. With the emancipation, however, they rapidly lost their members to the urban centers, former capitals of the states that the united kingdom of Italy had meanwhile turned into provinces. In the course of these rapid social and topographical changes, the centuries-old tissue of Italian Judaism, still strong in the 18th century, had frayed, while the falling of the ghetto walls put an end to an isolation that discriminated against, but at the same time protected, the integrity of these communities.

THE Italian Jews at the beginning of the 20th century had not lost their pride in their origins. They understood that the events that allowed them to become financially richer than, and politically equal to, the rest of the population also made them religiously poorer. They compensated for the loss of content in their separate collective identity by constructing grandiose synagogues, in which liturgy and decorum tended to imitate church pomp, while increasingly moving away from the atmosphere of sacred life and study that had permeated the small, beautiful synagogues of the Italian ghettos. In Turin this process reached a significant peak—fewer than 3,000 Jews, already forgetful of their ancestral traditions, decided to build a synagogue competing in height and architectural originality with the Eiffel Tower. Lack of funds finally prevented the Mole Antoneliana from becoming the Jewish house of prayer, and this enormous and useless building eventually became the symbol of the capital of Piedmont.

The need to compensate for long centuries of misery and oppression, however, pushed the Italian Jews to use the new riches acquired through the emancipation to purchase—whenever and wherever they could—lands and castles, less as an investment than as a natural reaction to the state of inferiority in which they had lived for so long. To buy, as my great-grandfather did, a castle that had belonged to a branch of the royal family, the dukes of Genoa, was a doubtful investment but a social consecration. This desire to climb socially, shared at that time by all the Jews of Western Europe, was probably less resented in Italy than elsewhere. Yet it helped to link the traditional currents of Church hostility to the Jews to the new, secular forms of anti-Semitism on both Right and Left, the strength of which Jews seemed unable to measure and in most cases refused even to perceive. In Italy, as elsewhere, the nationalist Right regarded them as intruders, and the Left as marginal people who preferred to join the bourgeoisie rather than to identify with the proletariat. However, the success of the House of Savoy in uniting the peninsula, and the unlimited support that the Jews gave to this nationalist, unitarian Italian policy, allowed them to integrate into Gentile society more quickly and more deeply than in any other country, including the United States, and to believe in the existence of unique historical conditions.

Indeed, it was not by chance that Italian Jewry was able to provide a minister of war, the first in modern Jewish history, and two prime ministers while also contributing to the Italian wars of independence and to Garibaldi's militias thirty times more, proportionally, than the rest of the population. In the thirty most crucial years of the Risorgimento, from 1840 to 1879, the Jews in fact felt more Italian than the Italians, because, unlike most of the inhabitants of the peninsula, they had no links of loyalty to the aristocratic and Catholic regimes of the Italian states, which had traditionally kept the Jews apart from the rest of the population. By supporting the cause of the Risorgimento, guided by men like Mazzini, Cavour, Garibaldi, and Victor Emmanuel II, the Jews stood squarely behind a political movement that justified its territorial conquests and the unification of the various Italian regions into one kingdom with an aggressive nationalist, liberal, and anticlerical ideology.

The Jews thus found themselves also defending ideas befitting not only their particular communal interests but also those of a rising political and

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military power—the Piedmontese, who could not rely on the unequivocal support of the Italian masses. Indeed, the Piedmontese government, especially after the military defeat suffered in the years 1848-49 at the hands of the Hapsburgs, could not rely on wide popular sympathy. Neapolitans, Romans, Florentines, Modenese, Venetians, tied to ancient local regional loyalties, hesitated to throw in their lot with the ambitious but—to many—foreign Savoy dynasty. The Jews, however, as a "landless tribe," were ready to serve it unconditionally and to work for the creation of a new "fatherland" in which they could feel equal to others. They therefore brought to the Risorgimento an unlimited enthusiasm and faithfulness, supported by a relatively high cultural and economic level and reinforced by valuable international relations. The marriage between the dynastic Piedmontese interests and the communal ones of the Jews opened for the latter all the doors of political, cultural, and economic influence as nowhere else in Europe.

Thus, for some decades, Jews like my great-grandfathers and grandfathers felt themselves to be not only the citizens but also the founding fathers of a new nation. This transitory but exhilarating situation also gave the majority of the Piedmontese Jews a psychological compensation and moral justification for the abandonment of their ancestral traditions, making them believe that they were both "true Italians" and "true Jews"—a hybrid situation and the source of that "fascination" that would later on so greatly surprise a Zionist leader like Chaim Weizmann, the future first President of the state of Israel. In the 30's he could not fathom how Jews who were so assimilated could be so free of what he called in his memoirs the "fatuous presumptions of the so-called Frenchmen or Germans of the Mosaic persuasion."

MY GRANDPARENTS on my father's side had become bankers. On my mother's side they traded successfully in land and cattle. In both cases they had become affluent and—to judge by their portraits—fat bourgeois, with all the prejudices, aspirations, social conformism, moral values, and weaknesses common to a generation of "new" Italians interested in the greatness of their fatherland as much as in the success of their own affairs.

To preserve Judaism in these conditions was an unrewarding and difficult task for them. In 1848, when a group of Jewish students in Turin, on the fiftieth anniversary of Jewish emancipation in Piedmont, asked Max Nordau, the then-popular writer and ardent Zionist, to contribute an article to their paper, he answered with a message that analyzed correctly the new situation of Italian Jews:

> Up to 1848, o Italian Jews, you were Jews in Italy; since then you have become Italians of Jewish extraction. What will you be in the future? Pure and simple Italians, without even the adjective "Jew" which reminds you of your past? People assure me that this is what will happen. They tell me that the majority of the Jews in Italy—excuse me—of the Italian Jews, have forgotten their origins, have no longer any Jewish interest, do not know or want to know the history of their race, are indifferent to the sufferings of their brothers in other countries, do not even admit the existence of a brotherhood of faith and do not desire to preserve any link with those of their blood who live under less blue and sunny skies. Is this true?

For my family, at least, this was perfectly true. I do not claim that my grandfathers were ashamed of their Jewishness—quite the opposite. But their Judaism had become something purely formal, devoid of its ancient values. Mixed marriages were considered shameful, but Jewish girls of good families, like my mother and her sister, were sent to study (little and badly) in convent schools where they would acquire a "better education." No self-respecting Jewish family of the time would have dared to eat bread during the eight days of Passover. Both my maternal and paternal grandmothers were proud of their beautiful Passover porcelain dinner services, used only for that one particular week of the year. But the thought of not having bread in the kitchen for the use of the servants, or of not consuming forbidden foods or wines, would never cross their minds. When, out of respect for some elderly and "bigoted" member of the family, they observed some "unusual" details of the Jewish tradition, they did it convinced that such rituals had no further reason to exist in modern society, although most of the assimilated families continued to exalt the value of the tradition.

Nobody, for instance, had taught my mother Hebrew, or explained to her the rudiments of Judaism, with the exception of some vague notions in preparation for her bat mitzvah, celebrated in the style of a Christian girl's confirmation. My father used to recite by heart, morning and evening, a small section of the *Shema*, the biblical passage that forms the center of the daily liturgy. He also carried in his wallet the text of the *Kaddish*, the sanctification of God also recited by mourners, printed in Latin characters on a card. On the back of this card there were lines on which to record the names and dates of the "dear departed" according to both Jewish and Gregorian calendars. On these anniversaries even the least observant Jews felt it their duty to visit the synagogue. On the Sabbath preceding the *yahrzeit*, that is, the anniversary of the death, my father made sure to be called up to the podium in the synagogue, next to the rabbi, to attend the reading of the weekly portion of the Bible. At the end of the reading, of which he did not understand a word, he had the name of the departed relative announced together with the sum of money he

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was offering in his memory. For the rest, and in spite of his pride in being Jewish, my father was totally ignorant of Jewish culture. One could not accuse him of consciously breaking Jewish law, since nobody had ever taught it to him. He knew that pork and hare, which he enjoyed immensely, were forbidden foods according to some outdated Jewish ideas. He would have been sincerely surprised to learn that it was also forbidden to light a fire on the Sabbath.

Thus, almost as a reaction to this ignorance, his generation and that of my mother had invented a series of their own private "rites" to mark the Jewish holidays. God forbid that at the end of the Yom Kippur fast, which in my family only my father kept, we should not eat the *bruscadela*, a traditional Piedmontese dish consisting of slices of toasted bread soaked in strong wine. Yet the idea of stopping work or giving up a business deal or trip because of a Jewish festival would never have crossed their minds.

We children had all made our entry into *daminyan*, a corrupted Jewish expression indicating our coming of age. Male Jews at thirteen years of age enter into a *minyan*, or group of at least ten men, without which it is not possible to recite most of the prayers in the synagogue. To prepare for this they used to send us to Talmud Torah classes in Judaism, on Thursday afternoons, a day chosen to avoid the study of religion clashing with a tennis party or a skiing outing, which usually took place on Saturdays and Sundays. Between the solemn engagement to uphold Judaism, which the young Jew undertook on the day of his religious initiation in front of happy, proud, and usually tearful families, and the subsequent observance of Jewish precepts there was, of course, no theoretical connection. It was obvious to us that "Jewish life" and "normal life" belonged already to two separate spheres. They usually overlapped in the request of Jewish parents to exempt their children from the study of Christian religion at school, a request automatically granted by the school authorities (and regarded as a privilege by one's non-Jewish schoolfellows).

My mother, therefore, like my father, grew up in a climate of obsolete Judaism and of vigorous Italian nationalism, and, as a result, she shared all the virtues and prejudices typical of a generation of Jewish bourgeois sure of themselves, affluent, and respected, and totally unconscious of the dangers that lay waiting for them in the future.

As was proper for young ladies from good and wealthy families, my mother had not followed a regular course of study. She could play the piano, embroider, had tried painting with little success, knew French and German, read fashion magazines, and took a passionate interest in books that dealt with religious questions. Her interest in such subjects was part of her inner nature. It had been developed by the nuns in the school in which my grandmother had enrolled her, convinced as the old lady was that the proximity of the *munie* (nuns) and a better knowledge of their system of life would immunize her from any "religious phobias." This turned out to be a correct forecast. My mother never turned into a bigot. Yet once she was installed on my father's estate it became natural for her to fill the long hours of boredom, while she waited for her husband to return from hunting parties or tours of inspection in the fields, by reading stories of the saints and martyrs of Christendom supplied by the local church, together with the picaresque novels about royal courts that my father had brought into his library during his bachelor days.

The emotional relationship between my parents ran on different levels throughout their lives. From the day he met her, by chance, at a university students' party, my father's love for my mother became his principal reason for living, and so it remained in spite of all the unexpected trials it underwent. "Neither of you," he used to say to my sister and me, half-serious and half-laughing, "is worth your mother's little fingernail." She, on the contrary, had an entirely different idea of married life—she looked on it as a duty of faithfulness, without burning love. The kindest and most thoughtful of people in her behavior, there was in my mother a core of coolness that married life was never able to warm, a coolness that inclined her to search for violent spiritual adventures, leaving the physical ones to remain part of a cluster of social and material interests that people of her class and generation believed could best serve the contractual engagements of respectful marriages.

Strangely enough, my father's and mother's families had not previously been acquainted in spite of the fact that they had lived for a long time in the same city. One originated in Spain and had lived for generations in the ghetto of Ivrea. The other came from France and had settled in a small village near Turin. My father had to work hard to obtain permission to marry my mother. Her parents did not regard favorably the union of their daughter, "beautiful, delicate, and innocent" (this was written in a song composed by a poet on the occasion of their betrothal), with a dowry of 300,000 golden lire, with a "good-for-nothing." This is how my father was regarded because of his inexplicable retirement at the age of twenty-four into the country after having tried in vain to persuade his mother to allow him to follow a military career instead of banking. As a compromise he had agreed to study law and for a time was even apprenticed to a famous lawyer. But the heavy sentences that a couple of his clients, petty thieves, had received at the conclusion of his impassioned defenses, had convinced him that he should withdraw from the bar and follow his un-Jewish passion for agriculture.

My maternal grandfather, who was a shrewd dealer in grain and land, suspected that this flight

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into the provinces concealed something shady. Before giving his consent to the marriage, he dressed himself in the shabby clothes proper for a cattle dealer and went to the village where my father was the mayor and the largest landowner. He took a room in the local inn and, between a glass of wine and a query about the price of cows, began to make some sly insinuations about Jews who had become heads of local administrations. He barely escaped being beaten up. Ashamed but happy, he returned to Turin convinced that my father, although indeed a queer fellow, was an honest one, capable of taking good care of public property as well as of his own, which consisted of 400 hectares of excellent land, a rich hunting reserve, broad meadows along the Tanaro River, and a kiln for making bricks. My mother accepted her suitor without enthusiasm but also without reservations, happy to get married and in this way put an end to her parents' fears that she might elope with a non-Jew.

My father's love for her, especially after the late birth of my sister and myself, grew with the passing years. However, when the marriage was celebrated in June 1908 with great pomp in the Turin synagogue, the feelings between the two spouses differed profoundly from the type of sentiment engraved on the gold medallion struck for the occasion. Among the numerous sources of friction between the two were also my mother's refusal to be separated during her honeymoon from a little fox terrier, which my father hated, and his refusal to drop his habit of smoking smelly Tuscan cigars, which she loathed.

On a warm July day, my parents arrived at their village home, tired from their long and uneventful honeymoon trip. Vigiu drove the landau, lined with white silk and shining with black varnish outside, drawn by two lively black trotters. He wore a top hat with yellow and green pheasant feathers, a long gray coat decorated with golden frogs, and with his gloved hands barely controlled the horses, excited at the clapping of the villagers and the firecrackers. The municipal council had lit up the main street of the village with Chinese paper lanterns and with torches in the windows of the castle that my grandmother had sold to the municipality soon after her husband's death.

A deputation of notables offered the newly married couple a message of good wishes embroidered on silk, in a wide oak frame decorated with their two portraits, the work of the orphanage nuns. In this message my mother was described as "a woman of sublime beauty and virtue." The village priest accompanied by the clerics, one of them a future cardinal, had organized a torch parade for the evening from the Chiabo quarter to the gate of the castle park. The carabinieri in full uniform maintained order; the municipal band played lively tunes; my father's peasants who, at that time, made up the majority of the village population, were lined up in the outer court of our home. Dressed in festive attire, their black kerchiefs around their perspiring necks, their Sunday jackets creased, they stood next to their wives and children, clapping and shouting at the tops of their voices, "Long live the Mayor," "Long live Madamin," and anxiously waiting for the golden half-sovereign that had been promised to every head of a family. They certainly did not think that a few years later my father would ask them to go and get themselves killed in battle. That night nobody thought of war or of the possibility that in the course of yet another bloody conflict my father and mother would be chased out of their home because they were Jewish.

My parents' total assimilation did not prevent them from being conscious of their difference from other people. Annetta, the maid who had entered my father's service before he married, also knew that there was something wrong with "the master." A minute person, deeply religious without being a bigot, she became my mother's confidante almost from the day she was promoted to the rank of personal maid. She carried out her daily work as though it were a mission, never tired, never sad. I could not understand why she had not married. In the course of the fifty-five years she remained in our service, with the exception of the brief period during which the Fascist laws against the Jews forbade her to work for us (though she continued to come secretly to help my mother), I do not remember ever having seen her in tears. On the contrary, she was always ready to laugh, even when things went wrong for her. The only thing she could never understand or admit was how decent people like us could not be Christians. She consoled herself, in the course of the years, with the idea that there must exist some strange links between us and God since on certain days of the year my parents used to go to pray in Turin and on other occasions they ate food that appeared sacred to her, although quite different from the consecrated host she took every morning at communion. For this reason, and although nobody ever asked her to do so, she had taken upon herself the task of cooking the family's "religious dishes." She did not know a thing about Jewish dietary laws but it was she who, more than anybody else, took care that we should follow, at least as far as the kitchen was concerned, our strange religious obligations.

Naturally it was at Passover that Annetta felt in her element. The great spring cleaning suited her Christian principles. Although she never understood why, at Easter time, we suddenly stopped eating pasta, bread, and cakes, she took over from the cook for an entire week and sent up to the table the *quaietta d'Pitu*—salted turkey meat, and unleavened bread soaked in meat gravy with peas —instead of the usual meat, ham rolls, and roast rabbit.

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On Yom Kippur it was she who, at the end of the fast—which she thought inhuman because of my mother's migraines—carried to the table the famous *bruscadela*, with which my father liked to break his twenty-five hours of total abstinence. At Purim, the Jewish carnival, which usually coincided with the Christian Whitsuntide, Annetta prepared small crisp squares for us. They bore little resemblance to the "Haman's ears" with which Jews celebrate the victory of Esther and Mordecai over the Persian prime minister who, in the Bible, symbolizes the prototype of the political anti-Semite; but they were equally tasty and agreeable to our Christian friends.

Annetta certainly would have liked to see us become Christians, but she would not have dared to interfere in such a delicate matter. Without knowing what it was all about, she never forgot to ask me when she tucked me into bed whether I had recited the *Shema*. I believe she imagined this prayer to be a pagan version of the *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria*. I always answered "yes," and then she sat next to my bed, falling asleep before me. In the twilight I liked to listen to her breathing, looking at her miniature features drowsing in the deep armchair.

It was not Annetta who influenced my mother to convert. Her conversion was the result of a dramatic affair during World War I and my departure for Palestine at the outbreak of World War II.

My mother's sister, educated like her in a convent school, had converted to Christianity—I believe in 1908 or 1909—after a long struggle with her family. Unlike my mother, who had a docile and mystic temperament, my aunt possessed an anxious and aggressive character. She was still very young when she fell madly in love with a lawyer in Turin, a fervent Catholic and the son of a noble family. Concerning this gentleman's birth, various versions were current in the family, all of them false, due partly to envy, and to the fact that he was physically and psychologically different from his two brothers. One, a well-known doctor, lived in an odor of sanctity; the other was to reach the top of the Italian naval hierarchy. When the lawyer met my aunt, none of his family had yet become famous. This, of course, made it even more difficult for my maternal grandparents to agree to the romance of their daughter. Their opposition only made her passion fiercer. In the bourgeois romantic atmosphere prevailing at the time, it was only natural that she threatened to commit suicide or run away from home with her lover. This second alternative would have been even more dishonorable than self-inflicted death, so after my grandfather died, consent was grudgingly given. My aunt converted and married, and the entry of this Christian uncle into the family made relationships within the "clan" even more complicated than before.

This uncle whom I acquired by marriage was a tall man, thin as a rake, a frequent sufferer from rheumatic pains, austere and authoritarian as befitted his profession, and with little sympathy for Jews. He was certainly not an anti-Semite. He had broken openly with the Fascist party—which he had supported in the beginning—after Matteotti's assassination in 1924, a gesture that showed his political far-sightedness and his moral stamina. But to him, the utilitarian and bourgeois conformism that my family had developed toward the Fascist regime made "certain types of Jews," as he used to say, unbearable to him. I knew him too little and I was too unaware of our family intrigues to discuss the judgment I often heard people passing on him. His long, drawn face, the offensive tone he often used to underline his ideas, his fits of temper, about which I often heard but never witnessed, made him unlikable.

In fact he scared me. An unpleasant remark he made about the Jews the day I went to say goodbye to him before leaving for Palestine gave me, quite unjustly, an excuse to break with him. After the war he let me know that he wanted to see me and clear up the misunderstandings that were keeping us apart. I refused to meet him. I was certainly wrong; as one of the first Piedmontese intellectuals to join the Fascist party and one of the first to give back his party card—something that for a man in his position was neither easy nor convenient—he could have enlightened me on many political and family matters for which I cannot find answers in the family archives. But another fact, which I learned only after my return from Palestine, had in the meantime helped to raise a barrier between us: that uncle had played an important role in the life of my mother.

At the outbreak of World War I my father found himself exempt from military service because he was a mayor as well as the firstborn son of a widowed mother. His filial duties had prevented him from entering the military academy as he had wanted. In 1916, a year after Italy's entry into the war, it became impossible for a fervent nationalist like him, who had preached participation in the war, to stay at home. He felt ashamed each time he had to take news of deaths to the houses of his villagers, transmitted to him ever more frequently by the military authorities. The event that finally drove him to join up as a volunteer, however, was the death of his favorite horse.

The army had requisitioned three of his horses at the outbreak of the war. He had seen them leave the stable for the front line, one after the other, docile, clean, full of energy: his hunting mare and Bayard and Harlequin, who were the matched pair for his landau. Only Blackie, a wonderful six-year-old gelding, born and reared in his stables, was left behind. My father succeeded in having him classified as a workhorse, although he had never pulled a cart or a plow in his life. I

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never understood why the army, which was already stuck in the trenches, needed so many riding horses. In any event, my father's first three horses were sent immediately to the front line, and soon came the military postcards announcing their deaths. Each time the unknown hand of some possibly romantic or melancholy officer had written to my father expressions of condolence more suited to the death of a man than that of an animal. But in that first year of war the peasants who filled the trenches counted for little. Italy, as much as other European countries fattened by forty years of peace, seemed to need—as Churchill said —a good bloodletting.

At the beginning of 1916 they came to take Blackie. Before he left, my father photographed him. This picture, enlarged to life size, was framed and hung in Blackie's stall in the now empty stables. Later the photograph was moved to the attic. Yellowed by time, it still shows, under the glass, a military postcard signed by a certain Colonel Depaoli of a cavalry regiment and dated April 12. It reads: "Most illustrious lawyer: I am sorry to have to announce to you that Blackie has died a hero's death. He was hit by a grenade which also killed seven men and a sergeant-major. He was a courageous and faithful animal. He gave the best of himself to the Fatherland. Please accept the expression of my most sincere sympathy." Three weeks later my father enlisted, unrequested, at the nearest recruiting depot.

MY FATHER was short in stature and for this reason he was registered in the infantry. After a few weeks as a private, they discovered that he had a university degree and sent him on an officers'-training course and from there straight to the front. For him, as for so many other members of the Italian bourgeoisie who had been in favor of Italy's entry into a war supposed to be short and heroic, the discovery that it had turned into a senseless and endless slaughter was a terrible shock. He bore life in the trenches in silence, like so many others, convinced that he was fulfilling a moral and historical duty.

I do not have any of his letters from this period: he destroyed them all when he returned from the front. I doubt if he ever kept a diary as some of his cousins did. I am grateful to him for his modesty, because when I read the correspondence of other members of my family that found its way into the nationalist press of the time, I feel a deep embarrassment at the cloying banalities, the forced romanticism, and the spiritual emptiness concealed behind the literary efforts of people whom I respected and whose hospitality I had often enjoyed. Already many years before the Fascist racial laws, this type of war writing and memoirs showed up the empty public morality of a generation of Jews who had lost both progressive social conviction and genuine religious and cultural belief.

The great flareups of patriotic sentiment that had driven Italian Jewry wholeheartedly to support the Risorgimento, and made them believe that nationalism represented the heroic epilogue of centuries of discrimination, had died down with the political achievement of Italian unity. Only in the schoolbooks had the new Italy remained the epic and pure country of Mazzini, Garibaldi, and Cavour; in practice it was a new, disorganized state, open to speculation and scandals. The Jews may have appeared less opportunistic than others, thanks to a certain reticence about exposing their financial success, due to their status as late arrivals. At least in our family, in spite of the break with our traditions, people still followed a style of life that united Risorgimento ideals with remnants of Jewish austerity.

During the war, however, I am convinced that for most of them Jewish sentiment often prevailed over other feelings. In my father's case this was certainly so. Facing death in the trenches, he tried desperately to reestablish contact with his Jewish origins. Among the books in his library I found one, torn and stained with sweat and mud, full of annotations, that clearly shows it was carried close to his skin for long periods of time. It was one of those books that the Italian rabbis of the time presumably thought could save Judaism through linguistic tricks. Their idea was to revitalize the ancient Hebrew language through literal translations into Italian. In this particular book every word of the prayers written in Hebrew characters was divided from the following one by a stroke, and below each word, also between strokes, was the corresponding Italian meaning. How it was possible to pray with such a text is beyond my comprehension: Hebrew is written from right to left, Italian from left to right. The translated words follow each other not only imprisoned between bars but also in the wrong order. They looked like a line of ants with their front legs touching their neighbors and produced a visual and verbal discrepancy that made these texts look as though they had been composed for retarded stutterers.

Yet every page of the book had been annotated, underlined by my father as had no other book in his possession. I often imagine him, sitting on a rock in a wet, muddy trench waiting for an assault, or checking his sentries, searching for courage and hope in the magic produced by this confusion of Latin and Hebrew characters. These printed words had lost their original meaning for him, and even if they had still retained something, the translation would have destroyed the rhythm they might once have possessed. But to my father, in those circumstances, they must have transformed themselves into mysterious links with an ancient and faraway world about which he was totally ignorant. Faced by a European civilization in the process of committing suicide in the mad war he had preached, that of his ancestors probably appeared to him as more solid and credible. One

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thing is certain: on Yom Kippur of 1916 my father rejected all attempts by his fellow officers to make him eat or drink before leading his platoon into one of the many deadly and useless assaults. He described that terrible day to me many times. Thirty men went out; six came back. His luck was rewarded by a brief spell of leave. He rushed back to his country home to find my mother had decided to become a Catholic.

ONLY after I returned from Palestine in 1945 did my father tell me the full story of this first attempt at conversion, about which I had previously acquired only fragmentary information.

My father, still amazed at being alive, had gone to the town nearest to the front to be deloused and had sent my mother a long, excited telegram to announce his forthcoming arrival. Therefore he was quite surprised not to find her at the railway station; his blacksmith, too old to be mobilized, was waiting for him with a calèche. This blacksmith—Carlin was his name—born and reared on one of our farms, considered himself, and was considered, a member of the family. To my father, who questioned him anxiously about my mother's health, he was unable to give a satisfactory answer. He kept saying that Madamin had looked a bit agitated during the past few months; that she had been seen walking a lot in Annetta's company; she had spent long hours in church praying for his safety. The village clerk had shown him a newspaper that described the heroism of, and the terrible losses sustained by, my father's regiment. It must indeed have been a horrible day. It was certainly thanks to Madamin's prayers that he had come out alive. She was doing a wonderful job helping refugees and giving out a lot of money to the village poor, while spending most of her evenings sewing with the orphanage nuns. My father knew of my mother's religious bent but never expected that instead of welcoming him with the warmth due a returning soldier, she herself, tense and excited, would announce to him her decision to become a Christian. He felt the most atrocious pain of his life.

He did not try to argue with this woman he loved. Wounded both in his masculine and his Jewish pride, he shut himself in his library for a day and a night, refusing, to Annetta's consternation, to eat in the dining room or to receive the friends and farmers who came to greet him. When he ordered the old gardener to hurry up and summon the village priest, the rumor ran through the village that something serious was taking place in our home.

The priest, a friend of the family with whom my father had spent many evenings playing chess and emptying bottles of wine, was the only person who had not yet come to welcome him back. My father trusted him fully and quickly understood that he was waiting to be called. Questioned as to what had happened in my father's absence, the priest gave him all the necessary information in detail.

With my father far away, my mother was even more bored than usual by country life. The assistance she gave to the war refugees, the knitting of vests, balaclava helmets, and scarves for the soldiers who were freezing in the trenches, was not enough to fill up the days of a woman who aspired to be involved in something different, more beautiful, greater. In the village, the war, with its unending slaughter, brought to every family with a relative in the front lines a feeling of anguish, of terror, but also of anger and revolt against those who preached the war (and who now were more despicable than the workers who stayed home). The Jews, moreover, did not have special interests to defend in this conflict, as they did in the wars of the Risorgimento. They wanted to protect their newly acquired positions but no longer felt part of the country's elite. On the national scene there was no longer a Nathan, mayor of Rome, to shield Mazzini in his home, nor an Artom to work as a private secretary with the count of Cavour to unify Italy, nor an Ottolenghi, who, after serving as an officer with Garibaldi's troops, had been rewarded with a title and the war portfolio.

The Jewish community, from which my mother felt estranged in any case, had little to offer its members in those days. The synagogue imitated the Church wherever possible, introducing, for instance, the organ on the Sabbath and High Holidays, and dressing its rabbis in ludicrous black gowns and hexagonal hats. The patriotic rhetoric that these rabbis spouted from the pulpit sounded less convincing than the patriotic sermons of the priests in their churches. It was more difficult for a Jew than for a Christian to think of a Jewish soldier in the enemy camp as an enemy. The Church, with its symbols of human and divine sacrifice, offered messages of faith and hope befitting the mentality of Christian soldiers. The synagogue, however, had nothing similar to offer its own faithful. The rabbis prayed for the return to Zion while Jews were asked to die for the recovery of lost Italian provinces; they exalted the Exodus from Egypt while millions of people knew that they would never leave the trenches alive.

The war eroded, for everybody, moral values, the links between the classes, and the reciprocal feelings of respect and authority between them. My father, who had voluntarily chosen to share the horrors of that war, clutched at the meager advantages offered by the army: the authority of a military uniform that at last he could wear; the solidarity of the fighting men; the respect he aroused in others by his fatalistic approach to death; his belief in the just cause of Italian arms; the simplicity of the choices facing him: recover Trieste for Italy—or death.

My mother, however, was seeing her *belle*

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epoque world crumble in an atmosphere of growing vulgarity and social promiscuity, in the dissolution of that aristocratic ambience—in fact already well and truly dead—that the Jewish middle class aspired to join like the rest of the country's petty bourgeoisie.

The war, viewed from the leisure of a quiet country life, increased her desire, indeed her need —more out of boredom than out of a sense of adventure—to go beyond good and evil. She felt herself swept away by events greater than herself, without support within the family, guidance in her religion, or advice from her friends. Desperately searching for values to hold onto, for occasions to feel different, she found in her brother-in-law someone ready to listen to her doubts and offer dispassionate counsel. Free—I have never known why—from military service, or perhaps serving locally, he visited her frequently, brought her religious books, and put her in contact with a friar gifted with eloquence and a desire to conquer for the Christian faith a Jewish soul so naturally prone to religious enthusiasm. This friar quite possibly thought he was acting in the same spirit as Italian soldiers conquering Austro-Hungarian positions in the front line. He had understood that my mother, separated from a husband who had preferred war to the boredom of country life, rich, without children, and searching for her identity, needed to do something exceptional, to make a gesture that might correspond with the general atmosphere of heroism created by the war. The Church attracted her with its liturgy full of music, its paintings, its literature soaked in sacrifice and passion. It offered her an opportunity to realize herself, within a strong, confident hierarchy, capable of understanding, comforting, and bestowing social approval.

The village priest talked at length to my father. He did not conceal the failure of his weak efforts to postpone, in time if not in spirit, a decision that he thought improper for my mother to make as long as my father was away from home. But what could he, a poor village priest, do against so many persuasive and influential people? There were also limits that his cassock imposed on him in such circumstances. To save a soul, to bring a lost lamb into the Church, was a duty he could not hinder even if he felt, out of friendship for my father, unable to participate actively in such a mission. He had spent many unhappy hours, he told my father, torn between his religious duties and his human obligations. In the end he had decided to withdraw from the whole affair. His conscience, naturally, was not at ease. But who on earth could sleep peacefully with what was happening in the world these days? His eyes shone with unshed tears as he finished speaking. He blew his nose several times into his big, red, snuff-spotted handkerchief, shook hands with my father, and returned to his parish after exchanging a few words with Annetta, who was anxiously waiting to report back to my mother anything she could learn about the meeting.

My father understood that in such circumstances there was little to be done on the spot. He could not hope to persuade my mother to return to an ancient faith about which he himself knew so little. He could not expect, by his brief presence, to neutralize the effect of months of persuasion by so many missionaries. Without greeting my mother, he took the first train to the city of Cuneo and asked to speak with the bishop. They were not friends, but they knew each other well enough for him not to be kept waiting. In any event, his bearing was so stern that nobody dared to hold him up. In a few short, well-chosen sentences he explained his problem to the bishop. He told him that he was due to return to the front lines and therefore could not care less how he would die. He knew that the friar who had got into the habit of visiting his wife belonged to the bishop's diocese. If he did not receive on the spot a promise that no priest would be authorized to baptize her before the end of the war or prior to his death, if the bishop did not give him a formal guarantee that neither the friar in question nor any other priest would enter his house in his absence, he would look for the friar and put an end to his life. Then he would decide what to do: commit suicide, stand trial, or go back to the front lines and get killed. He had already informed his lawyer, in writing, of his intentions and prepared a communiqué for the press. Should the bishop refuse his request, he would see to it that people would be informed how the Church was stealing the souls of the wives of Jews who were away from their homes fighting for their country. He gave the bishop five minutes to decide.

Standing upright, with a theatrical gesture he took his watch out of his pocket. It was a gold Longines, with the monogram and the profile of King Victor Emmanuel II engraved inside the cover. He had inherited it from his uncle, to whom the king had presented it in return for delicate services performed for the "beautiful Rosie," the morganatic wife of the king, when she was still the mistress of the monarch. The watch, my father told me, showed ten past eleven in the morning. With his eyes fixed on the hands, he stood there waiting for the answer of Holy Mother Church.

I do not know what impressed the bishop most: the compressed fury of a man known to be one of the influential notables of the province, or the threat of a scandal. He asked my father to sit down. He ordered a very strong coffee. He offered him a Tuscan cigar from a box well-concealed in his table drawer. He tried to calm him down in every possible way. Then he promised "to do his best" and in my father's presence ordered the friar to be summoned to his office. My father left the episcopal palace not entirely reassured but convinced that he had done his utmost. The idea of

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returning to the front lines now seemed to him almost pleasant. Death would free him from a painful situation, just as the conflict with his wife was freeing him from the fear of going back to the trenches.

During the whole of his leave, he did not speak of religion to my mother and tried to enjoy as much as he could the warrior's rest. The detached behavior of a man who was ostensibly preparing himself to die probably made my mother hesitate to make the final decision. Before he left for the front, he learned from the village nuns that the friar no longer had the right to come to the village. Thus the conversion was postponed by twenty years to the day when, following the Fascist anti-Jewish laws and my departure for Palestine, my mother was again shaken by a violent religious crisis.

IN THE meantime, however, another factor helped to consolidate the religious truce between my parents—my father was in danger of being shot for high treason. Back at his regimental headquarters, he found an urgent call from the General Staff Office; they needed, he was told, a cipher officer in the personal secretariat of the king. The position was being offered to him on condition that he knew how to type. For an entire afternoon and throughout the night, my father worked unceasingly at one of the strange new office machines. The following day he successfully passed the examination. Thus, he moved from the mud of the trenches straight to the luxury of a Venetian villa, in direct contact with the king and the top commanders of the Italian and Allied armies. This period of rubbing shoulders with the "top brass" he had so much longed to join probably influenced his opting for Fascism later. It also produced a valuable collection of photographs of the great personages of that time, which I have inherited and like to admire whenever I can, always asking myself how so many important and apparently honest and intelligent people could have allowed such a slaughter to continue unchecked for five years.

For my father the transfer also meant taking my mother away from the estate in Piedmont and bringing her to Udine, the nearest big town to the front lines. He obtained all the necessary permits for her arrival and chose appropriate accommodations for her. Then, just before her arrival, on a January night in 1917, he had to decode a personal message from Czar Nicholas to King Victor Emmanuel, in which the Russian emperor announced an offensive against the Germans. There was nothing strategically or tactically decisive in this action. The operation ended with a slight advance in the Riga area, during which the Russian troops, exhausted and already undermined by revolutionary propaganda, conquered a few German positions in the marshy area of Tircul. But for the Allies, pressed as they were by the armies of the Central Powers, this was excellent news. My father decoded the message and then made four copies, as was his procedure for top-secret documents: one for the king, one for the chief of staff, one for a certain General Porro, whose position at that time I do not know, and the fourth one for the file to which he alone had access.

I have heard the story so many times that I remember every detail by heart. It was January 4. There was quite a crowd of officers at the café in the Piazza dei Mercanti in Udine. A war correspondent approached a Russian liaison officer, slapped him on the back and said at the top of his voice: "At last you are moving!" People immediately crowded around the journalist, who retreated behind a mysterious smile, while the Russian ran to his office to report the matter. In the evening, while my father was busy at his decoding work, two officers came to his office, declared him under arrest, and took him straight to the commander in chief, General Cadorna, for interrogation. To whom, he was asked, did he reveal the contents of the coded telegram? My father did not know what they were talking about, but in such circumstances hypotheses were of little use. Since only four people could have known the contents of the telegram, and nobody could suspect either the king or the two generals, it was natural that suspicion should fall squarely on the fourth, the junior officer who knew the contents of the message.

By chance, a military police officer, in civilian dress, was present in the café when the war correspondent made his remark. He interrogated him and learned that he had entered the office of General Porro when nobody was there. He had cast an eye on the dispatches lying on the table, read the czar's telegram, and been unable to stop himself from showing off.

However, it took more than two weeks for the matter to be clarified, during which time my father was kept under house arrest. A court-martial was set up, and the danger of being sentenced to death became very real. Equally serious was the fact that a rumor began to spread that a Jewish officer had committed a serious crime. Jews who heard the rumor—and the many members of my family who were in uniform immediately became aware of it—thought a new Dreyfus case was being prepared. My father's brother, who already held an important position at general headquarters, came to see him, accompanied by one of Italy's leading lawyers.

Meanwhile, my mother had arrived in town, unaware of the events and totally confused by what seemed to be a major family, and perhaps national, tragedy. She knew my father too well to doubt his innocence. It was natural for her to come to his defense, to offer him her moral support, while finding in this affair an exciting diversion from her religious problems. For a few days the situation was serious. My mother, connecting her husband's troubles, through who knows what sort of

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logic, with her attempted conversion, already felt herself responsible for what was happening to him.

THEN suddenly the charge against my father was dropped, official apologies were offered, and he regained the trust of the king. This happy ending smelled too much like a miracle not to be regarded by both my parents as a sign from heaven. And thus it was in Udine, a sleepy provincial town where many years later I would celebrate my bar mitzvah, that my mother promised my father to abandon the idea of changing her religion. It was a promise she kept strictly for more than twenty years and to which I owe the fact that I was born and raised a Jew. However, when the Fascist anti-Jewish laws were published and the world crumbled around my parents, my mother found herself once again isolated and unprepared to face events greater than herself.

My departure at the age of sixteen for Palestine, a country she could not even locate on the map, catalyzed her religious crisis. This time my father no longer had the courage or the authority to dissuade her. His world, too, was shattered, the world of a Jew who had been a faithful servant of the House of Savoy, a Fascist, and a confirmed Italian nationalist. He himself felt little comfort in the few Jewish rites he still observed, nor was he able to explain to himself the sudden social thunderstorm that was hitting him together with the rest of European Jewry. The only thing he could count on was the affection of the woman he loved. If the Christian faith—he explained to me—could comfort her in the midst of such a disaster, he had neither the right nor the desire to oppose her decision.

One day, when he was particularly open with me about these very personal matters, he told me what he did on the day my mother, on her confessor's advice, made a public act of repudiation of Judaism. The whole family (including those members who had already converted in secret) took this formal public statement very badly and denounced it as an act of treason, aggravated by the unnecessary publicity. But my father preferred to send to the convent, where she had retreated to prepare herself for her baptism, a bunch of red roses, like the ones he used to offer her on the occasion of their wedding anniversary. Then he went into the fields to prune his vines.

My mother saved two of these roses. When my father died a few years after the end of the war, she asked me to put one on his coffin, which she felt she could not follow to the Jewish cemetery in Turin; she took the other with her to Israel, where she went every winter after my father's death instead of going alone to the Riviera.

In Jerusalem, where everything was new and strange to her, she seemed at last to find some peace of mind. On Sundays she used to go to mass, with great discretion, in a monastery where most of the monks were, like herself, converts from Judaism. With their help, she started learning Hebrew. One evening I surprised her teaching my son the same prayers that I had heard my father recite near my bed when I was a child. She spent long hours walking in the garden of the Convent of the Sisters of Zion at Ein Kerem, a convent built at the end of the last century by a rich French Jewish banker who had converted to Christianity. In this place of peace and faith, she used to tell me, the little Judaism she had learned as a child revealed itself to her as the roots of the Christian gospel, while the catechism that the priests had taught her appeared to be dressed in Jewish robes.

Sometimes, in the afternoons when she looked at the shadows of the olive trees lengthening on the Judean hills and the square stones of the convent turning first red then purple under the rays of the setting sun, she felt herself overtaken by a sweet languor. It seemed to her that time was melting her doubts, that the ancient landscape made her pains and anxieties minuscule in the face of the mystery that here, more than anywhere else, weighed on the conscience of the living and on the oblivion of the dead.

When she suddenly fell ill, she asked for and was given permission to be buried in the cemetery of the convent. The gravestone only bears her name, the dates of her birth and death, and a cross. Every year it sinks a little deeper into the earth, as if the body it covers were asking for a closer embrace. One day it will disappear, I imagine, sucked in by the soil perfumed by the winter rains, concealed like the other tombs by the broom and the wild gladioli that blossom in spring and disappear at the first sign of summer—the scratch left by a life on the face of eternity.

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Of Markets and Myths

Robert B. Reich

WHENEVER Americans discuss government's role in the economy, the terms of debate are deceptively clear. Either we leave the market free, or the government controls it. The starkness of the choice thus posed infuses issue after issue with mythic overtones, and excites controversy over where we dare and where we must abandon other social concerns in favor of the vigor of the market, or abandon free enterprise to pursue a higher public good. But the continuing debate has generally failed to help the public understand the options and the stakes of each issue.

Two truths underlie the grand debate; each side tends to emphasize one to the exclusion of the other. First, government efforts to dictate economic outcomes are inherently inefficient; they stifle innovation and concentrate decision-making within imperfectly accountable bureaucracies. Second, unfettered profit-seeking inherently neglects both the broader costs and the potential benefits that do not figure in individual tallies of profit and loss. This is true to the extent that the rules which define the market fail to induce profit-seekers to take such effects into account.

Posing the debate in mythic terms, as a moral choice between the security combined with stagnation of bureaucratic control and the vitality combined with rapacity of capitalist enterprise, obscures the more prosaic but central choice, the real choice, of *how we make the rules.*

The idea of a free market somehow separate from law is a fantasy. The market was not created by God on any of the first six days (at least, not directly), nor is it maintained by divine will. It is a human artifact, the shifting sum of a set of judgments about individual rights and responsibilities. What is mine? What is yours? What is ours? And how do we define and deal with actions that threaten these borders—theft, force, fraud, extortion, or carelessness? What should we trade, and what should we not? (Drugs? Sex? Votes? Babies?) How should we enforce these decisions, and what penalties should apply to transgressions? As a culture accumulates answers to these questions, it creates its version of the market.

These answers are not found in logic or analysis alone. Different cultures, at different times, have answered them in different ways. The answers depend on the values a society professes, the weight it places on solidarity, prosperity, tradition, piety, and so on. In modern societies, government is the principal agency by which the culture deliberates, defines, and enforces the norms that structure the market. Judges and legislators, as well as government executives and administrators, endlessly alter and adapt the rules of the game—usually tacitly, often unintentionally, always under the watchful eye and sometimes under the guiding hand of interests with clear stakes in the outcomes of particular decisions.

To the extent that rhetoric frames the issue as one grand choice—between government and market—it befogs our view of the series of smaller choices about the wisest and fairest of an endless set of alternative ways to structure the rules of ownership and exchange. The mythic choice between government and market blinds us to the real source of so many economic inefficiencies and outrages—bad choices about rules, flawed procedures for making such choices. Complicated laws and regulations lack the emotional charge of mythic struggle, but they are where the action is.

ECONOMIC activities often have consequences for people not immediately party to them. Some of the consequences are unwelcome: private ponds flood neighboring fields, locomotives ignite prairie fires. Some are socially useful: a beekeeper's swarm pollinates his neighbor's orchards; knowledge gained in developing a new product proves relevant to a range of other endeavors.* As the world shrinks and the pace of

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* Economists call these negative and positive side-effects "externalities" because they fall outside the specific market transactions that give rise to them. That is, the parties to the transactions do not consider these consequences in their decisions, with the result that there are apt to be too many external "bads" and too few "goods" from society's point of view. The notion of an "externality" suggests something inevitable and definitive. It is important to understand, however, that these "bads" and "goods" are external to the transactions only because the prevailing market rules do not include them.

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economic change quickens, many of these side-effects loom larger. Industrial pollution, unsafe products, community abandonment, and sudden unemployment all take a toll. Simultaneously, new knowledge, skills, and experience are ever more central determinants of a society's prosperity. How are we to deal with these social effects? The mythic contest between the free market and government intervention forces us either to ignore them, or to rely on countless government directives to pull corporations, and on subsidies to push them, onto paths other than the pursuit of profit. Each of these alternatives invites abuse and inefficiency, which tend to launch the pendulum of righteous fulmination in the opposite direction.

There is a third alternative, however. It is to reorganize the market to bring these broader effects into consideration as private agents decide on transactions. This is not a utopian proposal. It suggests merely that the government concern itself with designing the right market rules, rather than trying to dictate the right market results. Consider how the most recent swing in the pendulum has obscured government's role in dealing with the unwanted side-effects of corporate action in just this way.

"Deregulation," a term which had its heyday in the late 1970's and 1980's, was broadly seen as a manifestation of a decisive swing toward the free market, away from government intervention. In fact, deregulation represented only a shift in the nature of government action, from commanding specific outcomes to creating and maintaining new markets. By 1980, for example, the airline industry was deregulated in the sense that the Civil Aeronautics Board no longer passed judgment on air fares or routes. Carriers could compete on prices and services, to the delight of passengers. This reform did not eliminate the government's involvement in the air-travel business, but rather shifted government responsibilities. Government was now charged with organizing a new market, whose development called for all sorts of decisions: under what conditions should mergers and acquisitions among airlines be barred because they might stifle competition? How should airport landing slots be apportioned among competing airlines? On what terms should airlines gain access to their competitors' computerized reservation systems?

The ideological fixation on *deregulating* the airlines—on the mythic choice between government control and market freedom—led policymakers to ignore their responsibilities for creating and maintaining this new market. The result: by 1986, the airline industry was becoming concentrated in the hands of a relatively few large carriers, capable of informally coordinating their long-distance rates. Passenger fares were beginning to rise once again.

In addition, with so many more flights and more passengers, there was a greater risk of accident. The government now had to expand its safety inspections—and also restructure industry incentives to guarantee the proper degree of care. This prompted some liberal interventionists to talk about "reregulating" the airlines. But that option was irrelevant to the issue at hand. In continuing to view the choice as between government intervention and the free market, the more subtle questions of market design were often obscured.

THE control of air pollution offers another example. Since the passage of the Clean Air Act in 1970, the federal government has issued mounds of regulations—determining the maximum concentrations of air pollution throughout the nation, and how much airborne toxin could be emitted by each of tens of thousands of industrial facilities. Enormous amounts of data had to be accumulated and analyzed, and even then it was possible only to issue uniform and inflexible rules for whole industries and regions. The uniform rules took no account of individual needs or deviations, and were altered only slowly or more often not at all as circumstances changed. They were almost impossible to enforce.

Free marketeers (including not a few trade associations and large businesses) periodically argued that because the costs of enforcing the Clean Air Act far exceeded its benefits, the regulations should be scaled back. Environmentalists (and, if polls are to be believed, a majority of the American public) disagreed. The debate centered on the value of clean air versus the costs and inefficiencies of regulations to achieve it. But posed in this way, the debate left out a far more useful line of inquiry: how could government better organize the market to attain the cleanest possible air at the lowest possible social cost? This way of framing the debate might have invited consideration of a system of transferable pollution permits. Such permits—issued in numbers equal to the maximum amount of pollution allowed in a particular region—could be bought and sold by polluters. Thus each polluter could decide which was cheaper, in light of its own special circumstances: cutting pollution or buying permits. As a result, the air would be as clean as before but most of the cost of curbing emissions would fall on firms that could do it most cheaply. In addition, all firms would have an incentive to develop more efficient methods of cleaning up in the future.*

Or consider the question of how tall and wide buildings should be in a crowded city. For years, American cities struggled with complex zoning regulations designed to ensure adequate sunlight

* In 1979, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency initiated a "bubble policy," which allows state and local regulators to offset increases in pollution from one plant by decreases in another.

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and fresh air for their inhabitants, notwithstanding office construction that was rapidly depleting the downtown air space. As the price of office space increased and developers became cleverer and more demanding, the regulations typically grew more complicated and less effective. But the answer was neither to bar further development, as some argued, or to abandon all efforts to save some modicum of fresh air and sunlight. It was for government to organize a market in air space, featuring a three-dimensional form of property which could be purchased and sold, like any other. Some of this property would be reserved for the public's fresh air and sunlight (rather like a three-dimensional park). Thus, as developers purchased the air space their proposed buildings would displace, construction would occur on sites where it was most valuable, and fresh air and sunshine would be retained at least cost.*

A final example concerns product safety. Here again, the most important choice is not between government intervention and the free market. In the absence of regulations governing product safety, consumers injured by a faulty product do not simply take their business elsewhere; they seek compensation for their injury from the producer or from their insurer. The practical choice, then, is between (1) regulations specifying how safe products should be, (2) lawsuits by injured consumers against the firms that produced the products, and (3) a more comprehensive system of insurance that would fully compensate injured consumers for any lost wages, pain, and suffering they endured. To the extent that government withdraws from the task of regulating product safety directly, it finds itself more involved in the latter two alternatives. Indeed, by the mid-1980's there was some evidence that the Reagan administration's disinclination to regulate had prompted a rise in product-liability lawsuits. The action had simply moved from the regulatory agencies to the courts. The central question, however, remained: which response, or combination of responses, comprised the most efficient and equitable way of coping with products that caused injury?

As these examples suggest, the absence of goverment regulation does not necessarily mean an abrogation of government authority or the abandonment of public goals. It often calls for a different governmental role—organizing and maintaining decentralized markets that can align the publicly desirable with the privately profitable. The debate over the relative merits of government intervention or free enterprise has obscured this more difficult and subtle task. It has distracted the attention of the public and of opinion leaders, who continue to fulminate against either government incompetence or corporate irresponsibility. Because neither free marketeers nor interventionists are accustomed to view the challenge in terms of market design, this more fruitful course has often been left unattended.

PRECISELY the same lesson applies to corporate activities that have *positive* social effects, like creating new knowledge and skills. But here again, the mythic choice between government intervention and an unfettered market has obscured the central issue. Our debates often have degenerated into diatribes about whether government should attempt to steer the direction of the nation's economy by selecting for favorable treatment certain "industries of the future," or leave it to the market to decide who comes out the winner. Some liberal interventionists have talked wistfully of tripartite boards comprised of business, labor, and government, which would plot industrial strategies and outcomes. Free marketeers have argued in response that the government is incompetent to pick winners, and that any such attempt would just end up as another trough at which the special interests feed. The debate has been less than edifying.

A truly edifying debate would be about how the market can be better organized to stimulate new knowledge and skills. The government has already tipped the scales in certain directions: countless decisions about taxes, publicly-sponsored research and development, the enforceability of commercial contracts, defense procurement, the organization of banks and securities markets, labor, patents and copyrights, antitrust, and international trade (to name only a few pertinent areas) influence how the American economy is evolving. Because each industry has a distinct competitive environment relative to all others—based upon the costs it bears and the markets it serves—any seemingly evenhanded rule is likely to affect it differently from others. The notion of "neutral" policy is simply fantasy. Even something so apparently neutral as tax-depreciation rules for plant and equipment alters the relative prospects of industries whose competitive success hinges on the careful hiring and training of personnel or on the use of sophisticated marketing techniques (the costs of which can be deducted in the year they occurred) vis-à-vis those that depend on factories and machines. Gross disparities in effective rates of corporate income tax among industries† have been due not so much to tax breaks targeted to particular groups of firms as to differences in the ability of firms to take advantage of superficially neutral deductions and credits. Notwithstanding the determined efforts of tax reformers—which in 1986 did indeed manage to eliminate some of the less rational disparities—no conceivable tax system can raise revenue without having an effect on the structure and dynam-

* In the 1980's, several American cities were experimenting with this approach, with varying degrees of success.

† In 1982, commercial banks paid 2 percent of their income to the government; food processors, 25 percent; automakers, 48 percent. See Joint Committee on Taxation, "Taxation of Banks and Thrift Institutions" (United States Government Printing Office, March 9, 1983), Table 2.

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ics of the economy. The same general point applies for every other rule of the game. Most industry lobbyists—and not a few legislators and government officials—well understand that no rule, however neutral in appearance, is neutral in competitive effect.

Disparities in effect are inevitable as new circumstances impel the design of new rules. A sampling: should copyright protection be extended to cover the circuitry etched on computer chips? This decision would profoundly affect the development of computers and semiconductors. If no copyright protection were granted, then each semiconductor and computer manufacturer would have a strong incentive to copy another's circuit designs rather than invest money in designing its own. This in turn would create winners out of smaller or more backward segments of the industry—including upstarts in South Korea and Taiwan—at the expense of industry leaders like IBM. It could also be expected to reduce the ardor with which inventors devised new chip designs. On the other hand, a decision that chip designs can be copyrighted would make it difficult for smaller firms to produce peripheral equipment or programs compatible with leading computers, whose innards they could no longer copy. This would have the effect of shouldering them out of the market, and boosting IBM. Either way, the pace and direction of technological change (and workforce experience) would be affected.*

Should coal-slurry pipeline companies be authorized to lay their pipes beneath railroad lines?† An affirmative answer would alter both the energy industry (enhancing the competitiveness of coal, reducing that of oil) and transportation (boosting the pipelines, hurting the railroads which would then carry less coal to market). Should the government grant fiber-optic cable systems rights of way along interstate highways? An affirmative decision here would spur fiber-optics, but stall the development of communications satellites, which compete with fiber-optic cable for data transmission.

The list of such questions can be extended indefinitely. Each decision affects how the economy evolves, and the sorts of skills and knowledge that will be generated as a result. What computer language should the Defense Department adopt so that its complex networks of military hardware can "talk" to one another? This choice would alter the relative competitiveness of several high-technology industries and firms, each of which has invested in different computer languages and standards. How long should proprietary drugs maintain their patent protection? A decision here would shift the balance between proprietary and "generic" drugs, and determine both the cost of prescriptions today and the pace of drug research and development. Should large firms be permitted to band together in joint-venture research, which might spur the pace of technological advance but cut competition? And so on.

America's competitiveness is directly at stake in many of these choices. In 1982, for example, a federal judge approved the settlement of a government antitrust suit to break up AT&T, the world's largest corporation, into seven regional holding companies—"Baby Bells"—and a new, but far smaller, AT&T. This decision boosted competition and reduced prices on long-distance telephone service. But it also opened a vast new market to Japanese producers of telecommunications equipment. They could now sell their private-branch exchanges, fiber cables, cellular phones, digital networks, and other gadgets to the new Baby Bells—who before had got all their equipment from Ma Bell.

The decision to dismember AT&T also had an effect on Bell Labs, AT&T's research arm, which had previously functioned as a kind of national laboratory for developing new technologies in transistors, semiconductors, and advanced electronics. Before the break-up, Bell Labs' research had been financed, in effect, by all of us through our telephone bills. But the new, more competitive AT&T could no longer afford such luxuries. Bell Labs shrank, and much of its work was redirected toward more immediate applications. Thus a national telecommunications policy with major consequences for America's place in the world economy was set by a solitary unelected judge.

None of these decisions turns on whether the government should "intervene" in the market, but on how competition within the market should be organized. It is impossible for government *not* to make these sorts of decisions. A decision not to decide simply forces private parties to rely on prior decisions, or else creates uncertainty in areas where the prior decisions offer no clear guidance for what the market rule should be. But because technologies, tastes, and industries are forever changing, new questions are always arising, and prior decisions are often inadequate.

The debate over whether government should embark upon a centralized "industrial policy" has tended broadly to miss the point. Our government and every other is continuously engaged in devising industrial policies through market-structuring decisions. Indeed, the key to Japan's successful industrial policy has lain not in any elaborate plans emanating from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), but in

* This issue arose in *Apple Computer, Inc.* v. *Franklin Computer Corporation*, 714 F. 2d 1240 (C.A. 3, 1983); Congress grappled with it in enacting the Semiconductor Chip Protection Act of 1984, but in important respects the issue has remained unresolved.

† The technical question is whether the government should confer to the pipeline companies the power of "eminent domain" to take the land, paying the railroads only an appraised market price.

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an industrial structure that has been designed and redesigned for the express purpose of pushing Japanese industry (and Japanese workers) into ever more complex and efficient production—thereby extending outward the frontier of Japan's production possibilities as quickly as possible. Japan's rules of the game (taxes, public procurement, the organization of banks and labor, and so on) are tilted in favor of the rapid accumulation of new knowledge and skills.

In the United States, by contrast, the pattern of winners and losers that has resulted from our implicit industrial policy is typically of the "do-it-yourself" variety—spearheaded by the most politically active and sophisticated industries, firms, and labor unions. The pattern bears no particular relation to those economic activities that could be expected to advance as the American workforce gained experience and skill in applying new technologies. Our resulting industrial policy has lain buried, and the larger choices it embodies have never been clearly posed.

THE problem is one of focus and interpretation. The deregulation of airlines *has* benefited consumers, but so has the regulation of toxic chemicals. The point is that many of the most important choices have nothing to do with the grand mythic division between free markets and control. When almost every discussion about the unwanted or the desirable side-effects of corporate activity becomes shoehorned into a debate over the relative merits of centralized planning or a decentralized market, we lose the capacity to design the market in accordance with our values. We thus miss opportunities to match corporate conduct to public goals *through* the market. Our cycles of righteous fulmination against, in turn, meddling bureaucrats and irresponsible executives have tended to elicit the worst of both worlds—a rigid tangle of rules that fails to enforce effective accountability. This is particularly lamentable, since it is entirely within our organizational and analytic powers to achieve a good deal more of the best of both.

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Houses of the Dead

Fernanda Eberstadt

THE sound of trees falling in the Arctic takes a long time to travel, and thus it may be understandable that one of the greatest of the Soviet prison-camp memoirs, Gustav Herling's *A World Apart*,* should have been published in the United States only last year, over four decades after the experiences it describes took place. Herling's book takes its title from a phrase in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Notes From the House of the Dead* (1861-62), a work that was the originator and forerunner of the Russian labor-camp chronicle. And since Herling's book is in spirit, structure, style, and import the true heir and sequel to Dostoevsky's, it might be helpful, before considering the former, to have a look at the latter. Fortunately, this task is made easier by the recent publication of *The Years of Ordeal, 1850-1859*, the third volume in Joseph Frank's masterful biography of Dostoevsky,† which deals with the years in which *The House of the Dead* was written.

Joseph Frank's book is an intelligent account of Dostoevsky's literary and polemical ventures of the 1860's and of his development as a thinker. Frank is judicious in his treatment of modern Dostoevsky scholarship, whether Freudian, hermeneutic, or formalist. More importantly, Frank uses his wide knowledge of European and American literature and philosophy to place Dostoevsky's ideas in their proper historical context, clarifying his work and experiences by way of writers as diverse as Eugène Sue and William James. In this manner, Frank demonstrates how *The House of the Dead* is both a highly innovative work of the artistic imagination and also a powerful dialectical tool in Dostoevsky's effort to refute some of the prevalent creeds of the day.

At the time of Dostoevsky's conviction in 1849 for membership in an underground political group and his transport to the Tomsk prison in Western Siberia, he was a young utopian socialist fervently convinced of the necessity of a peasant revolution in Russia, to be led by radical intellectuals like himself. In prison, however, Dostoevsky was confronted for the first time by living representatives of the very class he yearned to liberate. This intimate and prolonged exposure to the Russian peasant, in however pathological a variant, produced in him a profound and far-reaching political and religious conversion (complicated by the emergence of his epilepsy).

The first and most unpleasant revelation was Dostoevsky's discovery of how total and instinctual was the peasantry's loathing of gentlemen like him, how ineradicable its sense that there could be no common hopes or destiny between laborers and members of the gentry. From this flowed Dostoevsky's realization that any genuine, broad-based revolution, insofar as it would have to include the peasantry in its ranks, would be as bloody, as benighted, and as brutish as the peasant way of life itself.

Any honest and intelligent political thinker might have come to such a conclusion. It was Dostoevsky's peculiar genius, however, the genius of a man who, in one contemporary's words, "felt thought," to transport that idea a step further. The theories of revolutionary socialism so popular in Europe and in Russia, Dostoevsky concluded, were not just impracticable, they were also inhuman and therefore detestable. Why? Because such schemes aimed to foist a new social reality upon their beneficiaries *against their wills*.

In Tomsk prison Dostoevsky acquired as profound an aversion to the force of compulsion as any intellectual has ever come by. What makes prison unbearable, he learned, is not the cold or the hardship, the disease or even the boredom; it is not the separation from one's loved ones (certainly not Dostoevsky's loved ones). It is, rather, that grown men are herded there together, each against his choosing. And here was the link between prison and the utopias being imagined by his contemporaries. So prescient and so complete was Dostoevsky's understanding of where radical ideologies led that he termed the prison camp an experiment in "compulsory Communism." (Of course, Dostoevsky at times cherished his own, nativist brand of communal millennialism, but the age he looked forward to was to be ushered in by the voluntary spirit of Christian brotherhood.)

This, then, is the lesson Dostoevsky learned in

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* Translated by Joseph Marek, Arbor House, 262 pp., $16.95.

† Princeton University Press, 395 pp., $26.50.

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Siberia, and this is *The House of the Dead*'s most precious message: that liberty—the assertion of individuality and free will, even the will to choose evil—is the dearest and most fundamental of human needs.

As Frank shows, this idea was in large measure a response to the philosophy of rational materialism that was being advanced in Russia by the generation of "new men" led by N.G. Chernyshevsky, the young revolutionary whose ideas were later to influence Lenin and the Bolsheviks. In *The Anthropological Principle of Philosophy* (1860), a work Frank calls "the philosophical bible of the radical generation of the 1860's," Chernyshevsky posited the notion that man is a creature wholly subservient to the laws of nature, and espoused a Benthamite utilitarianism which rejected any appeal to morality in favor of "rational egoism," the instinctive urge to act in one's own best interests that would eventually lead man to establish a socialist and communal form of existence. As Frank notes, there was little room in this doctrine for notions either of free will and personal liberty or of the transcendent and supernatural. It was this mechanistic view of a world, with man as (in Dostoevsky's words) "piano key or organ stop," that was to rouse the novelist to the resounding profession of faith in God and humanity that is *The House of the Dead*.

Written five years before *Crime and Punishment* and almost twenty years before *The Brothers Karamazov*, *The House of the Dead* is the first masterpiece of Dostoevsky's early maturity. (He was forty when it was published.) Highly original in its literary techniques, *The House of the Dead* had the kind of electrifying effect on contemporary Russian audiences that Dickens's tales of workhouse orphanages and debtors' jails are said to have had on the collective conscience of Victorian England. (The czarist censors, ironically enough, had a different view; they feared that the book's picture of prison conditions was so benign, relatively speaking, that it would induce citizens to crime.)

Tolstoy rated *The House of the Dead* the best book "in all modern literature" and deemed it one of the very few which could serve as a model of "lofty religious art, inspired by love of God and one's neighbor." Turgenev, who was to excoriate Dostoevsky's later *Crime and Punishment* as "smelly self-laceration," compared the crowning scene in this earlier work with Dante's *Inferno*, while Alexander Herzen wrote that Dostoevsky "had created out of the description of the customs of a Siberian prison a fresco in the spirit of Michelangelo."

WHAT was it about this memoir which called forth such exalted praise, and from writers not usually susceptible to Dostoevsky's brand of metaphysical transport?

The House of the Dead is a work of semi-fictionalized autobiography, modeled after the then-popular form of the impressionistic "sketch" used by Turgenev in *A Sportsman's Sketches* and by Tolstoy in *Sevastopol Stories*. (Isaac Babel was later to infuse this form with a modernist verve.) In this book Dostoevsky describes in simple language the social structure of the Tomsk prison, from its kingpin racketeers down to its lackeys and pariahs. He details its work routines, its holidays, its theatricals, its public floggings, and, especially, the character and previous histories of its inmates. Here Dostoevsky presents the reader with a poignantly vivid rogues' gallery of wretches comparable to the underworlds of Balzac or of Victor Hugo: the saintly Old Believer convicted of burning down a church, the Central Asian brigand-innocent who prattles of Mahomet and Jesus, the flibbertigibbet aristocrat (later a model for Dmitri Karamazov) imprisoned for alleged parricide, the polite and inscrutable killer who quizzes the narrator for information about Napoleon and who strikes him as the type of wantonly destructive leader that a genuine peasant revolution might throw up.

Although *The House of the Dead* is scarified by the author's undying resentment at being reviled in prison by the very savages he longed to uplift, the book nonetheless manages to achieve a rare and loving sympathy for those same savages' willful idiosyncrasies, a reverence for their occasional accesses of kindness and humility and for the strength of their religious faith:

> It sometimes happened in prison that you knew a man for several years, thought of him as a brute and not a man at all, and despised him. Then suddenly a chance moment would reveal his soul in an involuntary convulsion and you saw in it such wealth, such feeling and heart, so clear an understanding of its own and others' suffering, that your eyes would be opened and in the first moment you would hardly be able to believe what you yourself had seen and heard.

Dostoevsky's book is filled with such epiphanies.*

The House of the Dead is a beautifully realized work of art, whose sometimes syncopated, sometimes treacle-slow depiction of time, as Frank points out, remarkably conveys the quality of days and years without freedom. Dostoevsky himself was justifiably proudest of the book's authentic rendition of the gaudily high-flown and self-mocking cadences of convict argot, mournful and

* The humanity which illuminates this book is extinguished, however, in the case of the moneylender Isay Bumstein, a chicken-necked conglomeration of cowardice and vanity whom Dostoevsky transforms into an observant Jew (his real-life original was Russian Orthodox) in order to burlesque what the author sees as the frantic mumbo-jumbo of Jewish ritual. Joseph Frank, who loves his subject for all the right reasons, is reluctant to give Dostoevsky's hatreds their due; for a more accurate picture of Dostoevsky on this subject, one must consult David Goldstein's *Dostoevsky and the Jews*.

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braggart by turns. Altogether, the memoir vindicates the poet Joseph Brodsky's general judgment of the kind of writer Dostoevsky represents: "Closing his book is like waking up with a changed face."

In addition to its intrinsic literary virtues, *The House of the Dead* has also been seen as the prototype of Dostoevsky's later and greatest novels. For here he may be said to have discovered and explored one of his abiding subjects: crime and the origins of evil in the human soul. Here we see Dostoevsky charting by case-study some of the more paradoxical impulses which assail us: the lust for cruelty toward others and for self-laceration, the desire to degrade what we most revere, the corrosive effects of power on an upright man, all the twists and coilings of the psyche which characterize Dostoevsky's greatest novels. Indeed, although *The House of the Dead* has been labeled by many scholars the "least Dostoevskian" of Dostoevsky's works—a judgment in which Joseph Frank concurs—I would suggest that if we mean by "Dostoevskian" precisely this quality of psychomachia, of a pitched battle for the soul between intensely realized individuals embodying the psychological extremes of a particular idea or philosophical concept, then *The House of the Dead* is in fact one of the *most* Dostoevskian of Dostoevsky's books. It is in large part thanks to Frank's elucidation of the intellectual origins and context of *The House of the Dead* that we can now see this more clearly.

It is no wonder that the insistence on freedom and moral autonomy which lies at the center of Dostoevsky's prison memoir should have had a very special meaning to those 20th-century inmates of the Soviet Gulag who came upon it. This latter institution has inspired works of art as different as Varlam Shalamov's subtle and delicately suggestive *Kolyma Tales* and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*, a book as elemental in its energy and grandeur (and ferocious humor) as a waterfall or a volcano. But of all the Soviet labor-camp memoirs, the one which is most intimately a sequel to *The House of the Dead* is Gustav Herling's *A World Apart*.

Herling's is not an uncommon story. Born in 1919, Herling (whose full name is Gustav Herling-Grudzinski) is a Polish literary critic and—at least at the time of this book's composition—a socialist, who was arrested in 1940 crossing from Soviet-occupied Poland into Lithuania in order to fight the Germans. To Herling's misfortune, the Soviet Union then enjoyed a friendship pact with Hitler's Germany: Herling was charged with espionage and sentenced to five years' hard labor. He was released in 1942 under an amnesty for Polish prisoners and joined the Polish army in Italy; he now lives in Naples, where he serves on the board of the Paris-based Polish review *Kultura*. *A World Apart*, written in 1949-50, is Herling's account of his eighteen months in the labor-camp complex of Kargopol near Archangel on the White Sea (just south of the Arctic Circle).

The memoir's fate is an interesting and revealing one. Herling writes as a leftist, bringing the news to other leftists that the paradisiacal Soviet Union is in fact a mammoth slave camp, a state in which "it is possible to cease to believe in man, and in the purpose of the struggle to improve his lot on earth." His tidings of the Soviet Gulag, in which over twenty million men and women were then being held prisoner and were dying like flies, did in fact come as news to the West, and unwelcome news at that. In 1951, the book was published in England to great acclaim; in a preface, Bertrand Russell scourged fellow-travelers of Soviet Communism but urged universal forgiveness for the crimes in which those fellow-travelers were complicit. (A curious reversal, this, of the dictum that we must love the sinner, not the sin.) The memoir also appeared in Italy in 1958, with a glowing introduction by Ignazio Silone.

In France, the cultural climate was less hospitable. In 1956 Albert Camus, then an editor at the prestigious publishing house Gallimard, accepted *A World Apart* for publication, declaring it a literary masterpiece; but he was later forced to send Herling a shamefaced note rejecting the book for commercial reasons. In a recent article in the Mexican literary journal *Vuelta*, Alberto Ruy Sanchez has plausibly suggested that Camus's fellow editors at Gallimard, Louis Aragon, a member of the Communist party, and Jean-Paul Sartre, a Communist sympathizer, were responsible for this forced turnabout. *A World Apart* did not appear in France until 1985 (with a preface by the Spanish novelist Jorge Semprun), a good thirty years after its original submission.

Camus declared that Herling's book "should be published and read in every country as much for what it is as for what it says." This judgment invites us to consider *A World Apart* as we do *The House of the Dead*, both as a work of literary art and as a philosophical credo.

A World Apart is a powerfully constructed piece of work. As it opens, Herling, having received his five-year sentence, waits in Vitebsk prison for transport to the White Sea camp. In prison he encounters a "dark Jew," a young Communist architect, who "weeping bitterly announced that France had fallen." At the book's close, 260 pages later, a flashback to the opening scene precedes a description of Herling's meeting the same man five years later in Rome after the end of the war in Europe. There the architect tremblingly reveals to Herling a secret that torments him and that only a fellow graduate of the Soviet Gulag can understand: in the camps he had once, on NKVD orders, denounced four innocent German prisoners rather than die himself. "I would like you to listen, and when you have heard me out, to say just one word, say

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only, 'I understand,'" the young man implores.

"In 1945 I already had three years of freedom behind me, three years of military wanderings and battles, of normal feelings, love, friendship, and sympathy," Herling writes. "The days of our lives are not like the days of our death, and the laws of our life are not the laws of our death. I had come back among people, with human standards and conceptions, and was I now to escape from them, abandon them, voluntarily betray them?" He turns his back on the man, and waits until he hears him leave the room, closing the door gently behind him. End of book.

Within this literary framework, which expresses so trenchantly the chasm between slavery and freedom, is Herling's own story of the House of the Dead, and of those hopes and habits which alone keep its inmates alive.

His tale of Kargopol is laid out in a simple, modest, and leisurely manner, itself reminiscent of Dostoevsky, a careful pace that represents a kind of slowing of the pulses. One chapter tells about the brotherhood of common criminals which terrorizes the camp and its women prisoners, another about forced labor, another about hunger and its different effects on men and women prisoners. In one chapter Herling describes nightfall in the camp, and the attendant fears of death that it brings; for all the prisoners in Kargopol are dying, and dying quite quickly of starvation and exhaustion, and none knows where he will be buried, or who will live to tell of it. One chapter is devoted to the rare "day of rest" during which prisoners seek to duplicate, in makeshift, their domestic leisure as free men. Another, to my mind one of the most heartrending episodes in modern literature, describes the House of Meetings, where lucky convicts are allowed to spend three days, mostly in silence and weeping, with visitors from the real world.

Another painfully unforgettable chapter tells of the effects of reading in prison a smuggled copy of Dostoevsky's memoir, with its exact rendering, one hundred years earlier, of Herling's own experiences; the thought of this continuous and unbroken tradition of slavery and dehumanization in Russian life drives him to inconsolable despair and a fellow inmate to attempt suicide. The last quarter of the book, curiously enough the least interesting, chronicles the hunger strike Herling undertakes in order to obtain the freedom promised for Polish prisoners by a Soviet-Polish agreement of 1941, his eventual victory in this attempt, and his slow journey west to join the Polish army.

INITIALLY, the reader coming from Dostoevsky may be struck not by the similarities Herling himself perceives, but by shocking differences of degree and intent between Soviet prisons and the penal institutions of an earlier age. Where Dostoevsky's prisoners pass the time counting off the hours and days until their release, in the Soviet Gulag prisoners are so certain of dying before their sentence is up, or—should they miraculously survive—of being resentenced indefinitely, that speaking of liberty or liberation is taboo. Where Dostoevsky's prisoners buy their own food from local vendors, hire their own cooks, and are issued a good ration of meat a day, Herling's are rapidly starving to death and many are afflicted with the various kinds of dementia and blindness which starvation brings with it. Where Dostoevsky's prisoners chatter extravagantly, Herling's either are informers or live in dread of being denounced and shot for a careless word. Where Dostoevsky's prisoners are with a few exceptions murderers or thieves, Herling's have been incarcerated for "crimes" as various as having received a postcard from abroad, having a relative who was swept up in a purge, or having been taken prisoner while in the Red Army.

These differences of content aside, Herling has drunk deeply of the literary art of Dostoevsky in *The House of the Dead*. Indeed, when it comes to depicting with almost surrealistic vividness the psychological manifestations of an idea, he may even be said to go farther than his Russian predecessor. Thus, in a chapter titled "The Icebreaker," Herling delineates the gradual effects of Soviet Communism on a simple and religious nature. Misha Kostylev, a young naval engineer and the sole support of his widowed mother, is fired by Communist zeal "to the cause of liberating enslaved Europeans in the name not of hatred, but of love for the unknown West." To this end, he learns French. But his reading of the 19th-century French classics awakens him instead to a magical new world of freedom. "Liberate the West!" he now asks. "From what? From a life of happiness such as we have never known?" As he explains his turn of conscience to the author, "I was like an icebound ship, and it's no wonder that I tried to escape into warm waters."

Kostylev is immediately arrested for reading foreign books and subjected to a year of interrogations and hearings. The combination of being beaten to a pulp, kept without sleep for days and nights on end, cross-questioned and accused of fantastic crimes, eventually dissolves this "icebreaker" of a man into submission and even a feeling of gratitude toward his torturers. It is, finally, with relief at the chance to atone for his crimes against the state that the newborn Kostylev goes to the labor camps. Yet still he tries, by what Dostoevsky in his time called a "voluntary and almost artificial martyrdom," to preserve his sense of pity and to remain linked to the buried past in which he was once a sentient human being. Kostylev eventually boils himself alive, rather than be sent to the Kolyma death camps.

Herling uses Kostylev's story to formulate in the most precise mechanistic metaphor the manner in which a man's spirit is broken and reset by the NKVD. Under interrogation,

gaps appear in the logical association of ideas;

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thoughts and emotions become loosened in their original positions and rattle against each other like the parts of a broken-down machine; the driving belts connecting the past with the present slip off their wheels and fall sloppily to the bottom of the mind; all the weights and levers of mind and will-power become jammed and refuse to function; the indicators of the pressure gauges jump as if possessed from zero to maximum and back again. The machine still runs on larger revolutions, but it does not work as it did—all that had a moment before appeared absurd now becomes probable even though still not true, emotions lose their color, will-power its capacity.

At this point the engineers of the soul begin to retool; working now as surgeons, they transplant a man's heart to the other side of his body, change the direction of the blood's circulation, remove infected parts of the brain. The reborn prisoner, weak but grateful, is eager to get to work, worried only by occasional twinges from his past but soon persuaded by the bestiality of the "hungry madmen" with whom he shares a berth and barracks that truly "the iron broom of Soviet justice sweeps only rubbish into its camps."

As a work of literary art *A World Apart* is truly golden, and it has been nobly served by its translator, Joseph Marek. Herling's prose style, calm, poetic, manly, is guided by an instinct for metaphor and allegory which works curiously enough to render his book more rather than less personal in its effects. Moreover, the imaginative and intimate intensity of the prose in *A World Apart* serves as a natural vehicle for (to quote Herling himself on one inmate, a former priest) "an understanding, sympathetic, instinctively religious attitude to human suffering." This all-comprehending sympathy which suffuses *A World Apart* is the more invigorating for being leavened with an immense personal rigor—Herling takes some pride in having been one of the camp "Stakhanovites," those Herculean laborers of Stalinist origin who fulfill their production quotas many times over—and also with a certain caustic realism about human potential.

Despite Herling's avowed socialism, and his periodic aspersions on the Roman Catholic Church, *A World Apart* is in fact a deeply religious book, a book which frequently gives one the sense, rare in modern literature, of a man talking to God. Thus, the author writes of his stay in a prison hospital ward:

> For a man unaccustomed to the violent contrasts of Soviet life, camp hospitals seemed like churches which offer sanctuary from an all-powerful Inquisition. . . . The hospital was the only place, in camp and prison alike, where the light was extinguished at night. And it was there, in the darkness, that I realized for the first time in my life that in man's whole life only solitude can bring him absolute inward peace and restore his individuality. Only in all-embracing loneliness, in darkness which conceals the outlines of the external world, is it possible to know that one is oneself, to feel that individuality emerging, until one reaches the stage of doubt when one becomes conscious of one's insignificance in the extent of the universe. . . . If this condition savors of mysticism, if it forces one into the arms of religion, then I certainly discovered religion, and I prayed blasphemously, "O God, give me solitude, for I hate all men."

It must be said, however, that for all its loving sympathy, *A World Apart* also mirrors Dostoevsky in another lamentable respect: whenever a Jew appears in Herling's tale, the narrative turns very grim indeed, taking on a tone of contempt and dislike which chills the reader to the heart. This tone is fleshed out by uncommonly nasty physical descriptions unlike any found elsewhere in the book. In *A World Apart*, Jewish eyes are either fishlike, inflamed, or peering from flabby faces "like currants pressed into dough." Jewish hands are invariably "clawlike," Jewish noses hooked or like "large gherkins." Jews in Herling's book do not talk or weep like other men but huff, puff, whine, and wail, and though they are musical, they make themselves repellent by their mannered performances. Similarly, Jewish sorrows, individual or collective, are described with an altogether uncharacteristic coldness.

Such telltale disfigurements aside, Herling's is one of the very greatest books to have been written about the totalitarian prison camp, both because of its profound literary distinction and because of the searching intelligence which its author brings to his exploration of the peculiar nature of Soviet evil. It is almost an incidental virtue of this work that the slavery it so electrifyingly depicts is shown to be thoroughly endemic to Soviet Communism, an essential and seemingly permanent element in its equation of power.

The British politician and journalist R.H.S. Crossman, in his introduction to *The God That Failed*, spoke thus of the unique ability of former Communists to understand and appreciate the values of Western democracy: "The Devil once lived in Heaven, and those who have not met him are unlikely to recognize an angel when they see one." So too one might say that those who have emerged from Russian prison camps, whether of the czarist variety or their more lethal Soviet successors, often achieve a peculiarly fierce love of liberty and reverence for the individual soul. The works produced by such men, though they themselves are by no means always admirers of the West, are an essential part of Western culture, serving as a continual exhortation to defend, strengthen, and extend those political institutions which best secure what Gustav Herling calls "the blessed irreplaceable" freedom.

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Patients

Michael L. Magie

My dentist is a well-trained and careful fellow. And he seems also to be a sympathetic sort. Perhaps that sounds odd in a dentist, but so it is. He does not like to give pain and takes care to supply enough novocaine to prevent it. He asks me to tell him if he hits a sensitive spot. He is willing, or so he professes, to stop and administer more novocaine if necessary. I have never tested this offer by actually requesting more, and it may be a clever form of psychological anesthesia. If so, it works. I feel that he is feelingly sensitive to my interest, and so I don't reject him and run off to find another dentist. I trust him, more or less, having come to believe he must be the sort of doctor that Montaigne said was the only sort he would trust, namely, one who has suffered the malady he is treating. I don't know why he would be so careful of my pain unless he knew, in the bone, so to speak, how it feels.

Why is it, then, that I am so reluctant to visit him? Silly question, eh? We're all afraid of our dentists. But do we know why? The physical discomfort is pretty minor, certainly not enough to account for our terror. Is there a tradition of fear, still living from the days before fancy anesthetics? Or does it stem from the immediate experience of those of us whose teeth have survived, more or less, from anesthesia's childhood, when the new electric drills ground slowly and long and the dentist gave us a nickel for being brave?

My wife tells me this essay is already too long. She stopped reading in the first paragraph with a shudder. "Why would I want to read about anything as horrible as a visit to my dentist?" she asks. Which illustrates my point, for those of you who are still with me. There's something really dreadful about a trip even to the most gentle of dentists. And why is that? I have a theory.

Tyranny.

You're sitting, or rather lying, in the chair, which is tipped far back, almost to the horizontal, to give the dentist and his assistant the best possible access to the remote reaches of your throat. They lean over you and poke strange instruments into your mouth, probing as few others will ever probe your intimate cavities (I won't explore the exceptions to this rule), testing for soft spots and holes, which they will grind, clean, and fill because it will be good for you if they do so. You are entirely at their mercy, subjected to them in the (if I may) root sense of the word, utterly powerless under their hands because it is good for you. Moreover, you agree with this doctrine of benefits; you have put yourself more or less voluntarily into this situation, and will even pay your tormentors for their pains, if that's the proper word for their part in the ceremony.

There is tyranny here, their benevolence and your willingness notwithstanding. They have the power and they exercise it over a passive and suffering you. The unrebellious oppressed always consent to their own subjection; that's what their patience means. And, what is more to the point, the true beneficiaries of the arrangement, namely, the tyrants, enjoy their power and like to celebrate it, even if they are polite enough to mask their celebration.

Mask is the right word nowadays. They wear masks to protect themselves against AIDS. The dentist and his assistants lean over you, peering from behind their masks like surgeons, waving their rubber gloves, and asking you sweetly if you are feeling all right, if you would like more painkiller, if you are comfortable. What else can you do after mumbling "Mho, Awghammet, ahmez ahnkumhfublez thduvlnhull" but let them think you said, "Well, I guess so, about as comfortable as possible"? And they smile and smile, as why should they not? Every solicitous question they ask celebrates their power. They are not in that damn chair, under the rubber "dam," suffocating and feeling guilty. They have arranged matters so that you will be the sufferer, that is, the patient, and will feel gratitude with your guilt.

And what do you think they are feeling? Superior, of course. It is you, not they, who lie weakly, helplessly beneath their instruments. And I think they must feel the more superior the more familiar they are with the patient's experience. Compassion is not the only result of the knowledge derived from a shared experience. They may know how to treat you better, both technically and ethically, because they have been there. They also know how much more desirable it is to be in their position than in yours. The most benevolent of kings is yet a king.

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The strongest of subjects, moreover, lies in the bonds of subjection. Guilt is the name of our chains.

We know one reason why we feel guilty in the dentist's chair. The dentist and the toothpaste companies and the radio and television media have conspired together for years to teach us guilt. If our teeth decay or our gums rot, our mouths are disgusting. And since the means of prevention are put benevolently at our disposal by caring anticarious toothcare companies, if we are disgusting it is our own fault. All you have to do to prevent such hideousness is (depending on who is caring most about you at the moment) brush, or floss, or stop eating chocolate bars, or use Toothpaste Alpha, Beta, or Gamma. You have a cavity? You must have done something wrong.

You remember the hygienist, with what gentle yet firm insistence she explained, during your last visit, what you might have done, or (which amounts to the same) what you might do next time, to prevent the calamity now afflicting you. She did not pronounce an overt judgment on your malfeasance. But that delicacy on her part only makes it harder for you to clear your mind of bad feelings and rebel against her authority. You want to cooperate with her, she is so very caring, and that means sharing in her unexpressed judgment. When you say or think, "You're right, I'll be sure to do that from now on," you all but add, "I promise," as if she really were a judge and could grant you leniency in recognition of your sincerity and good behavior.

What runs through all this training in guilt that we receive from hygienists and media and parents, what gives it its force, is our faith, our desire to have faith, that they have expert knowledge which we lack. With respect to our own diseases, whether of the teeth or some other organ, all we know is some sloppily identified symptoms and a great many feelings. "You're right" means "you must be right—what do I know about it? All I know is confusion. You're the expert." It's the same with the teacher and—dare I say it?—with writers. "I'm listening; you tell me. If you don't know, I'm in trouble." And that can't help also meaning, "I'm stupid, ignorant, and helpless—that is, sinful—through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault."

With the dentist himself there is on the surface less of this hypocritical game of authority and blame which one might call "Who's the Guilty Party?" The affair in the chair is more nakedly a matter of power. You have committed your crime. Tooth decay, like death, is the unmistakable wages of sin. But your dentist, like some technician of purgatory, can help you heal the blots upon your body. You will never again be innocent of cavities, but they can be filled and tended and made to gleam almost like new. Better than new, with the potions, minerals, and devices the dentist can now deploy to make him more powerful still. Technology comes in aid of strength. He injects you, inoculating against pain with pain. He grinds away decay, as many a minister, rabbi, and priest would dearly love to do. He installs in place of your corrupted tissue substances noted for their purity: porcelain, silver, sometimes gold. (Nowadays, too, there is plastic, which looks clean, despite its oily descent.)

Suddenly, or so it seems from within the stupefaction you have entered during the rough hour of your cleansing, the procedure comes to an end. The rubber dam and its spring support are carefully ripped from your mouth, tools are dropped into a tray, the probing light is snapped off, your paper bib is taken away, and the seat comes back up pushing you erect. You are released into the world of upright adults once more, but you no longer know how to act, even how to walk. Like a liberated slave or prisoner, you stumble from the room, fumbling with your tie and blinking at the light. Your soul is so numb you cannot be sure about your mouth, but talking is difficult. No one wants to talk to you, anyhow; no one has the time for you except the receptionist, who wants to schedule your next encounter with healing.

I've never encountered a woman dentist, though I understand that even in earlier days they were not unknown. The president of our local university in his commencement address claimed that 20 percent of the dental-school graduates were women. He was bragging about the progressive stature of his institution, but it still seems a small proportion. Even these few, where do they go? Into the labs? Today's women, perhaps, still in process of liberation for themselves, have yet to learn the fullness of masculine power lust. Even a dentist as seemingly careful about pain as mine is must enjoy his patients' discomfort as the occasion for his display of power, if for no uglier reason. It may be that few modern American women have progressed far enough in the ferocity of freedom to have developed a preference for this particular form of dominion. The dental assistants are women, and the hygienists, and the receptionists. Their place is in the margin of the polity. They are instrumental, functionary, facilitators of oppression, not oppressors. The dentists are men. We have kings in the land of toothcare, but few queens.

But my distinction is invidious. Women, I have no doubt at all, are fully as capable as men of being hideously brutal and power hungry. Perhaps a greater subtlety of mind has led them to prefer other political enterprises over dentistry. There are women doctors in plenty, for example—a fact which perhaps correlates with a somewhat greater subtlety, a less frank brutality, marking the doctor's subjection of his, or her, patients when compared with the dentist. This is not to say that doctors are democrats, however. *Au contraire*, my brothers and sisters. And in case we were inclined to overlook their eagerness to gov-

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ern, a turncoat member of their party has come forth recently to correct our misapprehension. Dr. Oliver Sacks, an English neurologist, has written several books giving accounts of his attempts to understand his patients' experience of some unusual and extreme diseases—sleeping sickness and migraine, for example—and has in the process provided an intriguing but disquieting picture of doctors.

Now, I do not mean to add to doctors' troubles by my little modicum of malice. Medicine has been much—all too much—in the news in recent years because of numerous malpractice suits and the consequent difficulties physicians have had with insurance companies. It is obvious that we generally and most unreasonably expect perfection of our doctors. When something is wrong with us, they are supposed to know exactly and quickly what it is, to know how to correct it painlessly, or at least efficiently, and infallibly to provide correction. No mistakes are allowed in either knowledge or diagnosis or treatment. If the doctor makes some mistake, so we now litigiously believe, we should sue the bastard. He's dealing with human beings, after all, and what's more to the point, with little old me and my health. There's no room for error, and no excuse for slipshod work. Take him to court!

Clearly, no other vocation, no other sort of professionals—except, sometimes, space engineers and NASA managers—face such demands. Everybody makes mistakes at work; nobody is expected to be infallible—not even the Pope except on special and very rare occasions. Why are doctors cursed with impossible standards of conduct?

If we take some hints from Sacks's books, we can absolve ourselves of blame. It is not because we are stupid and greedy. The doctors themselves are the guilty parties. They have led us to believe that they really are kings, and then, when they make a slip of some sort and reveal that they are no better than other mortals after all, we—turbulent underlings that we are—arise in resentment and rebellion and try to bring them down.

Sacks tells, for example, of one doctor, a surgeon named Swan, who treated Sacks himself after a terrible fall he took on a hill over a Norwegian fjord. I suppose many readers must know a good part of this story, for the episode of the fall itself was printed in the *New York Review of Books*, and the book telling the whole story, *A Leg to Stand On*, was widely reviewed. Suffice it, for the moment, to say that Sacks suffered rather severe damage to both the tendons and the nerve system of his left leg. A main tendon was severed in the fall and for a time he completely lost feeling and sense in the leg. The principal theme in the story for him is the conflict between his doctor's attention to the mechanics of medicine and the patient's—his own—frightening experience of disorder. In the telling Sacks infallibly turns the tables on his tyrant surgeon.

Dr. Swan sees Sacks's injury as nothing more than an interesting case of a severed tendon, which he has the skill to repair—as a carpenter (this comparison is proposed by one of Swan's assistants) has the skill to fix a broken chair. Sacks, though himself a doctor and sometimes able to take this coolly diagnostic point of view, is shocked to discover how indifferent to his feelings and experience Dr. Swan is. For his feelings are clamorous and full of alarm. He cannot feel his leg; he has lost part of himself—there is a hole in the self which he cannot fill. Yet the surgeon will not listen to his concerns before surgery. And afterward, on a triumphal tour with a flock of medical students in tow, he sweeps grandly through the ward to celebrate his victory over disorder. Sacks is not given the opportunity to describe his experience or express his doubts about his leg. Moreover, to his own dismay, he finds himself unable to insist.

One of Sacks's chapters is called "Becoming a Patient," and that is exactly the point: he has become you and me, and is shamefaced and guilty before his healer. He is unable to insist on expressing his feelings because in the face of his doctor's disinterest he cannot quite believe in their importance or in his own righteousness or justice when he repines and feels discontent. Notwithstanding that he is himself the doctor in other situations, here he is the patient, and if *his* doctor seems to believe that surgery has been successful and matters are under control, then, well, probably he's right. Doctor or no, you don't challenge the king.

Now, this state of weak subjection is frustrating to Sacks just because he is a doctor and has, by his account, been a remarkably vigorous and healthy type throughout his life. It is certainly not difficult, moreover, for me to sympathize with him. I have had my own bird-named doctor, who was as beautifully aloof from my experience as ever Sacks's Swan was from his. My Dr. Fowl was unmistakably a talented physician, clear-minded, medically perceptive, and knowledgeable. Only, he wouldn't talk. He would listen to your account of symptoms, giving an occasional unvoiced grunt of (I would guess) recognition. He would poke or probe, and run a test or so, as he thought fit. A quiet little smile would come over his face, he would make some notes on your medical record, and then he would write out your prescription and tell you, very succinctly, what you were to do. If you insisted on having from him some words as to the nature of the disorder afflicting you, he would suppress a look of slight irritation, or perhaps impatience is the word (the doctor was not patient in his doctoring), and give you the briefest of explanations, in language carefully reduced to the conceptual level of an imbecile. O, Dr. Fowl! If brevity is indeed the soul of wit, you were the wittiest doctor, nay, the wittiest man, the wittiest human person of my acquaintance. But so very dry.

On the other hand, so very right. And what, truly, did my feelings or my understanding matter

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if you healed me, eh Dr. Fowl? For after all he did heal me. He would not, or perhaps could not, tell me just what was the nature of the virus afflicting me, for which I consulted him once, ten years ago and more, but he gave me my prescription—vitamins and aspirins—and told me to lie down and be patient. Be a patient: it does not mean "become a rebel" or "go express yourself"; it means to submit for a while to this suffering and this healing. It occurs to me to wonder whether that is not just the thing needed after all, the right policy, and in more than the narrow business of suffering.

For I find myself feeling rather skeptical about Dr. Oliver Sacks, who wants so very much to take my side against his fellow doctors, but bullies me unmercifully as a doctor and as a writer. I want to believe him, to be sure, given my feelings about my dentist and my Dr. Fowl. Finding feet of clay would wonderfully shake the composure and mar the marble face of the *hauteur* I cannot help resenting. But Sacks exaggerates everything so. His manly vigor and health and strength as he fairly bounds up the mountainside; his fall so low into the despair he calls limbo during his difficult convalescence—in presenting these and the other sufferings of afflicted patients that he comes to share, Sacks is like an explorer into an unknown land, one of those late-Victorian chaps whose salient quality was their absolutely imperturbable faith in the accuracy of their perception, the importance and righteousness of their mission, and the rectitude of their judgment. At least they give the impression of imperturbability, though, like Sacks, they work at it; they find drama where they need it. If necessary, they indulge in melodrama. And like them, Dr. Sacks returns from his trial of courage as an evangelist, proclaiming the good news: "Imagine this: the natives of the country of pain, like those of Africa, are human! They feel, they speak, they cry out. Hear, oh hear!" And who counts as the natives in this allegory, the poor benighted denizens of uncivil wilderness? Who but you, my friend, and I?

Sacks in his explorer's account of the adventure of illness is the spit and image of the aloofly confident, unself-doubting doctors whose bubble he wants to prick. The medical facts, the mechanics of health, may be their special domain, where they are king. But he has his realm, too, where he now is the knowledgeable expert. It is the world of the patient's experience: there *he* knows, he rules, he demands obeisance.

Why do I resent this? Resent it more, in fact, than I resent my dentist's power or Dr. Fowl's taciturnity?

I do not trust thee, Dr. Sacks.
The reason why, my reason lacks.
Yet still, of this my feeling smacks:
I do not trust thee, Dr. Sacks.

Perhaps I can probe the matter some and make a stab at saying why I find myself so wounded.

THE answer, I suspect, has to do with the difference between literal politics and metaphorical politics. It is fun to talk about the power relation between my dentist and myself. The talk gives me an opportunity to play with things, with pain and disease, that can be all too serious; it gives me a play arena—a playpen, if you like—in which to act out resentments and angers which I do in fact feel, without giving them more importance and privilege than they deserve. What I have said about our relationship is, I believe, true: he has power over me; I feel it; I do not altogether like it. But the power is not the point. Or rather, the power is the point, but the politics of power is not. I submit myself to my dentist or my doctor because they do have power—the power given them by knowledge and skill. They can help me, and I believe that they will use their power in order to help me, benevolently. They are not in sober fact kings, not usurpers upon my private domain of feeling and preference and experience. They are no threat to my dominion over myself; rather, helpers, givers of power. With their help I will gain in the power of free action and pleasure that the healthy enjoy. Therefore I submit to them and their authority. And how stupid I would be if I took the playful politics literally and turned loose in the real world the little, raging democrat that roams maniacally in the basement of my soul, looking for escapes and excuses.

The situation is the same, or ought to be the same, with respect to teachers and writers, whom in this latter end of time our raging democrats also oppose. To them, if we are to get the good of them, we submit our minds. Not slavishly, regardless of incompetence or charlatanry. We have a thing called judgment, which we may employ, to withhold respect where it is not deserved, or to grant it in the due degree. But your eager democrat, your person of perpetual principle, touchy beyond belief about infringement upon his domain, lacks the patience necessary for judgment, is too desperate to await the formation of judgment. "Either my own king, and now, or a slave," is the dilemma, and the party slogan, of those who know their own greed too well to trust to the beneficence of others, and who thus abandon judgment in favor of rebellion. To them no dependence is tolerable, no subordination to power. Every relationship is consequently seen as essentially political, and the politics is not playful or metaphorical, but all too earnest and emphatic.

We have had an abundance of theorists in the past twenty years—educational theorists, literary theorists, sexual theorists—proclaiming the ubiquity of power and justifying the politics of rebellion. The literary sort have been struggling against the authority of authors in order to empower their own minds. No patient construing of words and sentences for them, no curious following of the motions of an interesting mind. They will not be followers or patients, but leaders, kings—and doctors. They dissolve the author's identity and

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deconstruct his text to free themselves by throwing off dependence on such pretenders. Or, if they admit that the author exists and the work has meaning, they rise against them and strive to overthrow them by willful but clever misinterpretation. They become "strong readers."

In this way reading is replaced by the politics of reading, when the power of a work, which made it worth reading in the first place, is taken as an imposition on the reader's sovereignty. To be sure, we are free to take this stance. Author and text, for all their hated authority, do not have the power to impose submission and patience upon us; there are no literary police. If we want to find politics in literature, even against the grain of our chosen text, we shall assuredly find it. But when we take this route, and reduce an interest in literature to an interest in ourselves, in our own liberty and power, we should not be surprised to find that our audience is reduced to our competitors in the political arena, fellow politicos, fellow democrats. If I am interested in James Joyce and you are interested in you, there is no ground for conversation.

But are there no literary police? The theorists of education, especially of the brand labeled "higher," are here to teach us otherwise, or used to be here; the lesson is dated. The teacher is a policeman, we were to learn, and an agent of cultural oppression; if not a tyrant, at least a functionary in the tyrannous structure of an unjust society. It is the professor who imposes Milton on us, or Proust, or authors who are middle class and men. The professor, moreover, insists that we learn not only certain bodies of fact but certain doctrines. How can we be free, how can we become what we truly are, or would be, if we submit to the tyrannical will of professors to teach us something? And considering what it is they teach—the evils that Milton believed and Proust loved and middle-class men prefer—it is a political crime to be patient, to be docile, cravenly to submit to so vicious a form of oppression. It is our duty, under the circumstances, to take a stand as free students in opposition to the politics of established professors. Since—remember the 60's—it would be difficult or dangerous and, anyhow, silly to rise in actual rebellion, the shrewder course, the action of choice, is, naturally, to become professors ourselves. When we put on the robes, policemen will be transformed into liberators. Then we can teach correct doctrine—provided that our students will submit to learn from us, with the proper submission and docility (because we have the truth, and . . . it will be good for them). And, in fact, the students who used to proclaim, or imbibe, such doctrines have by now become professors, or graduate students on their way into the profession they would reform.

For it is, of course, professors who have taught us this evil of professors, as Dr. Sacks has taught us the evil of doctors: they have power; they use it on us (more than Milton can), and sometimes abuse it; they ignore our feelings.

This teaching is, moreover, true if you use another name than "evil." They do have power, and use it. But that, after all, is why we sought them out to offer our submission, to learn from them by the teaching their power makes possible through their talent, knowledge, and skill.

On the other side, we do have feelings, to which they, whatever horrible tyrannous "they" we are currently resenting, are not notably attentive. We feel put upon, ignored, weighed down by their authority and their requirements of us. Like Sacks, we feel distress and pain, which we do not know how to convey or bring to their attention. Since they have authority, we would like them to confirm the importance of our feelings. But they don't seem to notice, and we feel hurt, angry, wrong, guilty. We may find ourselves feeling jealous of them, moreover, unless we take care to prevent that transformation. And since that is the political emotion, since being political means being jealous of power, since political action is built on jealousy, we may find ourselves all at once in rebellion.

If we but wait, however, other feelings are likely to come along in their turn. The doctor heals us, the professor teaches, the author teases and illuminates. Sacks himself was healed. He learned patience and his clamorous feelings of outrage changed to pleasure and gratitude and affirmation. Would the surgeon Dr. Swan have done better for him if he had sat upon the ground and joined him in lament? He was a surgeon, and could cut and stitch and mend. So he did that.

An odd notion has gotten abroad, that because we have feelings, we must do something with them, something public, and the sooner the better. Proclaim them. Act upon them. Maybe there is a better policy, something rather less dramatic and desperate to be done with our feelings, such as my Dr. Fowl suggested: be patient with them. And play with them a little in some inner theater where their clamor may do less damage than if we send them rushing up the aisles and out into the streets to rage along the barricades and gutters.

As for my dentist, well, I confess I am glad he is concerned to avoid causing me pain by his probing and drilling, even if it gives him a pleasure in his own power and superiority. And I am glad, no less, that he does not know, or at any rate does not pay any attention to, those other feelings of mine, the subject's angry resentments. He leaves them alone where they play their bits on my private stage, and goes about his business. If he ever mentioned them to me, after all, we should have to discuss them, and enter into negotiations about rights and the limitations of power and the other elements of sober, literal politics. We should without doubt end up quarreling over my rebellious feelings and his sense of duty. How would that help my teeth or in any way hold back the encroachment of universal rot?

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Israel's Alienated Intellectuals

Edward Rothstein

By now the "soul" of Israel has long since been consigned by the international community to a sort of purgatory. Not quite dead, not quite alive, it awaits a final condemnation which seems hardly to be in doubt. True, the apocalyptic judgments one heard a few years ago are no longer so fervent —the aura of immediate crisis produced by the war in Lebanon in 1982 having passed—but that is only because the period of mourning has itself passed into a mature phase of resignation.

This soul, once so vibrant, so full of progressive promise—once even celebrated in song by the Weavers on the stage of Carnegie Hall—has been, we are repeatedly told, corrupted, tempted by "dark forces" which began asserting themselves just about the time that Israel achieved victory in the Six-Day War of 1967. With that victory came hubris, arrogance, imperial acquisitions—including the land of the West Bank (which had been held by Jordan for the previous nineteen years), the land of Gaza (previously occupied by Egypt), and Syria's Golan Heights. Far from a victory, it was as if by some Faustian bargain that the Western Wall and Hebron fell into Israeli hands. And the consequent penalties were legion. The hero became oppressor, the pioneer became colonizer, democracy flirted with tyranny, devotion to moral law turned into vigilantism, compassion into racism. Within sixteen years, as the war in Lebanon wound down to its inconclusive end, it had become clear that the transformation was complete: Israel's soul had been sold for a piece of land. Thus say the voices of indictment.

Meanwhile, such voices aside, the problems on earth were quite real enough, neither those of hell nor those of purgatory. How to deal with a million new Arab subjects while in a perpetual state of war with Arab nations? How should the conquered territories be administered when prospects for negotiation and reconciliation were so slim and uncertain? To what extent should economies be integrated, or workforces, or legal systems? Considering that the West Bank territory captured in the Six-Day War had been occupied for the prior nineteen years by Jordan (whose own "right" to the territory had never been accepted in international law), and still earlier had been part of a colonially administered region under the British Mandate, what species of "occupation" should apply? How should towns be treated, like Hebron, which traditionally had been home to Jewish communities and to which Jews wished to return after having been driven out by the Arabs before 1948? What civilian policies should be extended to a territory won in war, held in trust, desired by all, and feared by many?

These questions were part of the true price of victory in 1967. But in the circles of international opinion, practical details and debates over policy were always subsidiary to the spiritual verdict, which was one of betrayal and worse.

Curiously enough, there soon was to be heard an echo, within Israel itself, of this international verdict, an echo so strong that at times it seemed the original source of the clamor. According to the international charges, a transformation was taking place within Israeli society, and indeed it was, but it was a transformation of a very different kind from the one alleged. This real transformation was not detailed in the mainstream press, or analyzed in a multitude of books and essays; it did not go by the name of Meir Kahane or Gush Emunim, and it was not defined by an intolerant religious fundamentalism and a no less intolerant nationalism. These latter developments, salient though they were, may even have been subsidiary to the one I have in mind.

When I was in Israel four years ago, I could hear evidence of the transformation in the conversation of three reporters for Israel Television with whom I was sitting in a café. Their tone of voice, their attitude to their country, brought back memories familiar to me from the late 1960's here in the United States. I heard a demonization of the country itself, a scornful repudiation of the middle class, an almost anarchistic disregard for the exigencies of practical detail, a romanticization of a supposedly lost pastoral age. I heard all this again the following year in the bitter words of an Israeli who was recalling for me the halcyon days of the "progressive" 1950's and condemning the Israeli government and people of today. "This is no longer my country," he said. And, listening closely, I could even hear it in acrid debates in the Knesset, in the overly dramatic hyperbole, the romantic appeal to times past, the apocalyptic disgust with things present.

In the American press, Israelis who express such attitudes have often been singled out for praise as courageous dissenting voices—signs, too, of a vigorous if troubled democracy. But courage has little to do with it: if anything, what can be heard is a uniformity of perspective and of emotion that suggests the presence of something other than a concern over issues and policies. It marks, rather, a wholesale shift in Israeli culture. This shift is all the more important

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because it involves one of the most vocal and articulate segments of the Israeli population—the intellectual class, the "elite" that once felt the country was "theirs."

In fact, there has developed in Israel a full-scale alienated intellectual class. Perhaps the clearest picture of it is to be glimpsed in the writings of Israelis published in *this* country—writings which feed, in turn, the already adverse international judgment of Israel. When, for example, during the Lebanon war, the novelist Amos Oz wanted to explain what in his view was happening to Israel's "soul," he did so in the New York *Times Magazine*. There he argued that once upon a time, "Israel could have become an exemplary state . . . a small-scale laboratory for democratic socialism." But then the refugees from the Holocaust came, "anti-socialist" Zionists came, "chauvinistic, militaristic, and xenophobic" North African Jews came. These groups wanted "bourgeois coziness." They objected to a Prime Minister who wore "khaki shorts and an open shirt." They chose " 'respectability' " over egalitarianism. And by them Israel was "pushed" into a "strongly pro-Western foreign policy." By the time of the election of Menachem Begin as Prime Minister in 1977—an event which holds the same talismanic significance for Israelis of this class as the Six-Day War did for critics outside the country—Israel had become a "small, militant nation-state armed to the teeth" and committed to "medieval religious fundamentalism."

A MORE recent example of the alienated Israeli at his most denunciatory is *Conflicts and Contradictions* by Meron Benvenisti.* Benvenisti, a former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, has become a familiar figure in the United States, regularly quoted in news stories by foreign correspondents and writing under his own name in the New York *Times* and the *New York Review of Books*. He is the author of an extensive study of the West Bank, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation, which is widely regarded as definitive.† The interpretations placed on the data collected in that study can be better appreciated, however, in the light of Benvenisti's new book, a polemical memoir which presents an impassioned, nostalgic, contentious explanation for what he calls his "cognitive dissonance" concerning the state of Israel.

The "pioneering values and social justice" of yore, Benvenisti writes, have been displaced in Israel by a "middle-class hedonistic culture," while the "twin pillars of Zionism and socialism" have been betrayed by the emergence of a "consumer society." The country, in short, has become an arena of "rampant chauvinism, xenophobic, ethnic, and national discrimination, clerical influence, political malaise, economic and social instability."

But what makes Benvenisti's apocalyptic account more vivid and more consequential than any number of others which regularly appear here and in Israel using the same vocabulary and the same arguments is not his general point of view, nor his command of facts and figures, but how revealingly confessional he is. As with many alienated Israeli intellectuals, Benvenisti's political positions seem rooted in personal anger. (When I interviewed him in Israel three years ago, he pounded his desk in impatience at my questioning. "For me Zionism is a dream that has become sour!") But unlike many others, he is willing to be explicit about the personal side of things.

THE sweet days of yore are described by Benvenisti—who, like Amos Oz, is a *sabra*—in a paean to his parents and their generation, to whom the book is dedicated. They came to Palestine, he writes, not by accident or because of persecution or religious belief, but "out of conviction"—that is, secular ideological conviction. And they brought with them a "revolutionary ethos," which Benvenisti proceeds to outline.

"We were to become the New Jews," he explains. These born-again residents of Zion possessed, first, a passion for *moledet*, a Hebrew word which refers simply to a birthplace or homeland but as a slogan of the Labor Zionist movement also came to connote the knowledge of and passionate attachment to the land of Israel. *Moledet*, Benvenisti makes clear, was at the heart of a cult, an Israeli version of the Germanic youth cults of nature familiar from the early decades of this century. There were hikes, virile tests of fortitude, exercises in Hebraic species classification, but above all, a passionate devotion to the land, its geography, and its history.

Benvenisti, at the age of eighteen, became a "high priest in the cult of *moledet*." He led hike after hike through the Negev. He kept count of the number of times (stopping after the forty-third) he climbed Masada, with its mythic associations of heroic Jewish resistance to foreign domination. The preparations for those hikes took weeks, while the hikes themselves, in which Benvenisti once used homing pigeons to maintain contact with civilization, were often grueling affairs.

Another element in what Benventisti repeatedly calls his "secular ethos" was *hagshama*, fulfillment, itself linked to the kibbutz, that institution of pioneer socialism which had such a profound influence on the formation of Israeli values. Where *moledet* signified a devotion to the land, *hagshama* signified a devotion to human society, or rather to what could be made of human society. It involved "a struggle for a new type of humanity." Its "genuine aim" was "to create a better form of social framework within which human beings could function on a higher plane." This was, finally, a socialist "dream," and one that in Benvenisti's description mixed notions of social justice derived from Jewish teachings, "anarchist" hatred for the state, and "contempt for middle-class values and for the modern, atomized society." So lasting were the effects of this intoxicating vision that even now Ben-

* Villard, 210 pp., $15.95.

† *The West Bank Data Project*, American Enterprise Institute (1984); an updated edition, *The 1986 Report*, was co-published last year by the Jerusalem *Post* and the American Enterprise Institute, 102 pp., $11.95.

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venisti tunes in to Radio Belgrade at night to hear the playing of the *Internationale*.

The young Benvenisti and his confrères in the cults of *hagshama* and *moledet* were not just pale bespectacled ideologues. They were *pioneers*—robust, proud, arrogant: "We were a caste, the sons and daughters of a revolutionary elite, beautiful, strong, in love with ourselves." "We made the most daring hikes, our dance groups were the best, our girls the prettiest." And out of this circle of pioneers grew an "old boy" network of similar-thinking types who filled the ranks of leadership in government and society in the new state and whose notions helped shape both its policies and its core political values.

WHAT went wrong? How could a culture set on such strong foundations have faltered? Benvenisti's answer goes a bit beyond that given by others of his generation, and beyond that given by younger Israelis with similar sympathies. Unlike Amos Oz, he does not find the fault to lie only in the bourgeois immigrants who disrupted his socialist Eden; nor does he blame only the religious fundamentalists and racist demagogues. Rather, he looks back and finds at least some of the seeds of dissolution in the transfiguration over time of the two-pronged ideology of *moledet* and *hagshama*.

According to Benvenisti, *moledet* was transformed from a passionate "secular ethos" into a "chauvinistic-fundamentalist cult"; in Israeli mythology, Masada was replaced after the Six-Day War by the Temple Mount. As for *hagshama*, it was rendered obsolete as early as 1948 by the practical needs that had to be met by the emerging state; there was, after all, an army to join, an economy to build, immigrants to care for. When faced with those needs, Benvenisti argues, many of his generation, rather than preserving their pioneering socialist vision, altogether abandoned the notion of "raising man to a higher plane," and were content merely to occupy that higher plane themselves, alone and alienated. So the ideology became fossilized; "no new ideologies with which we could come to grips with urgent social issues were ever formulated."

It is important to understand that Benvenisti is not here blaming the ideologies themselves. Though he confesses to an overweening elitism, still his aim is to justify the ideals to which he and his cohort dedicated themselves. To suggest that the utopian vision may itself have been flawed from the start would be to admit too great a failure.

Consider, for example, what Benvenisti has to say about the treatment accorded by his class of leaders to the Jewish immigrants from Arab lands who came to Israel in the early years of the state. Of this earnest, almost cruel effort to remake "human material" (as the immigrants were sometimes called) into cadres for the socialist-Zionist revolution, he writes that it was a "genuine, admirable, and even magnificent attempt that was undermined by its uncompromising standards and its total obliviousness to the nature of the people with whom we were dealing." But how could it have been magnificent if its results were shameful, entailing the scornful rejection of whole national and religious cultures; how admirable, if the standards were unrealistic and the "human material" was itself merely to be used in the service of an ideology? Benvenisti, still in love with the "uncompromising standards" of his youth, is willing only to grant that they may have been misapplied, never that they were misconceived.

And how was the cult of *moledet* exercised? "We walked for days in temperatures that reached 42 degrees Celsius (108 degrees Fahrenheit). . . . In actual fact, children got sunstroke and there were even deaths from dehydration." And how were the moral lessons of such an exercise applied?

> One day, on the shores of the Dead Sea, a group leader reported to me that a water container had been stolen from his group that night. I demanded that the culprit identify himself, and when nobody spoke up, I told the entire group, eight hundred strong, to empty out their water supplies, leaving only one canteen per thirty people for emergencies. That day we walked twelve hours to Ein Gedi without drinking a single drop of water.

Nor was personal cruelty of the kind revealed here the only element being cultivated in the New Jew. As Benvenisti himself writes, "all the hardships had ideological underpinnings." A similar hardheartedness was thus required when it came to such a fundamental question as religious belief. The New Jew was—had to be—strictly anti-religious, and ostentatiously so:

> We would observe Yom Kippur by loading quantities of food onto a raft and swimming out with it to an offshore islet in the Mediterranean, and there we would while away the whole day feasting. It was a flagrant demonstration of our rejection of religious and Diaspora values.

And of course the New Jew had to be anti-bourgeois: "I remember traveling on a Haifa bus and looking around at my fellow passengers with contempt and indifference—almost as lower forms of human life."

Benvenisti, no doubt, is a man capable of self-irony, but these recollections are offered by him not in ironic remembrance of his own venality as a youth, nor as part of a more general effort to develop a critique of 1940's and 1950's Labor Zionism, but rather in order to show how far things have fallen from the grand days of the past. And not just fallen. Benvenisti's ideas and sentiments have been, he writes, coopted, and by none other than his nemeses, the religious nationalists of today, who have the effrontery to act in as elitist and arrogant a fashion as he himself once did—but without his mitigating humanism. For him, the scandal of contemporary Israeli society is not just that his pioneering ideals have been passed by in a "middle-class hedonistic culture" but that an opposition has arisen with an ideology that resembles his in *form*. They, like him, have established pioneering settlements; they, like him, have declared a lofty and uncompromising goal; they even wear his old

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pioneering-style clothing, imitate his contempt for the state, and his disgust with the bourgeoisie. Thus Benvenisti recounts his outburst at a member of Gush Emunim who had dared to invoke Zionist symbols: "To whom do you think you are preaching? All the legendary Zionist personalities are my father's peers." You, he continued, make a "mockery of all my cherished symbols" to "justify repugnant policies and immoral actions."

Repugnant policies and immoral actions, in fact, are what Benvenisti sees wherever he looks in Israel—and precious little else. The disgust he feels is almost metaphysical, amounting to a "terrible feeling of shame" which turns out once again, in his case, to have deep personal roots. (It seems that as a young man he decided one afternoon to leave the kibbutz he had joined, and this "unforgivable sin" of "betrayal" has left him ever since with a "personal feeling of inadequacy" and a "deep emotional scar.") But psychological explanations aside, the world view that has emerged from this personal history—a utopianism composed in equal parts of uncompromising fantasy and unrelieved guilt—makes for political irresponsibility of a high order.

Benvenisti is capable, for instance, of asserting airily and with scandalous disregard for historical truth that the Arab-Israel conflict is one of "mutual and symmetrical exclusionary attitudes," or that the PLO's stance toward Israel mirrors the Likud's stance toward Palestinian Arabs and the PLO ("both meant the elimination of the other group as a community"). On the level of policy, he has declared that "in the long run" only a Palestinian state will offer a solution to the Arab-Israel conflict. But when it comes to the short run, he positively refuses to consider any practical steps toward a resolution or amelioration of the existing situation, mocking the very idea that it is incumbent upon him to do so, since that would allow critics to lead him into the "trap" of having to defend his positions. "I challenge the notion," he writes, "that therefore the diagnosis is invalid." By such inhuman standards, what hope does an ordinary state have?

BENVENISTI's vision of usurped authority and fallen grace would be little more than an idiosyncratic curiosity were it less common in Israel, and were his own point of view not taken as writ by foreign correspondents avidly quoting him to convey a "balanced" Israeli viewpoint which they then adopt as their own. The situation is all the more peculiar because Benvenisti's current authority rests less on his pedigree as an erstwhile New Jew than on the very practical, statistical work that he has done for the munificently funded West Bank Data Project, whose object is "the compilation, analysis, and assessment of all relevant information on the West Bank and Gaza that will reflect on the realities of these territories." Yet this study, which begins by calling for objectivity and care in the analysis of the data, ends by speculating on the potential "dark force" of Zionism as it becomes (allegedly) an ideology of subjugation and colonization.

The point of the project is to document that on the West Bank and in Gaza, as far as land, economy, law, and liberty are concerned, there have developed completely separate and unequal systems for Arabs and Jews, and that, in fact, the territories have effectively been integrated into Israeli society and government in this dual form. These claims are true to some extent. But the question is to what extent, and what is to be made of that truth.

What would Benvenisti have had Israeli authorities do in 1967? In 1976? And in 1987? The history of the West Bank under Israeli control is not, in fact, a history of annexation; it is a history of uncertainty, restraint, confusion, and also some passion. Under the circumstances it is no surprise that injustices and moral slights have come to light over the past twenty years, and very urgent policy problems remain to be dealt with. But facts on the ground should be clearly understood before being judged against the ideals of lost dreams. The dual system in the territories exists for legal reasons and for cultural ones; far greater problems would have existed were the territories annexed outright or held in some strange isolation waiting for Arab gestures of peace.

THE two societies which exist on the West Bank will continue to exist in their adversarial, separate, unequal, and curiously interactive way. But the interaction is complicated. For as Benvenisti dispassionately notes, Arab life on the West Bank has itself been transformed in the last twenty years. The total purchasing power of the million citizens of the occupied territories, for instance, grew by 10 percent a year for fifteen years; West Bank nutritional levels are the highest in the Arab world; the explosion of Arab housing and building is obvious to anyone who has ever passed through a village in the area. In 1972, only 35 percent of Arab households there had electricity and 14 percent possessed refrigerators; in 1981, the figures were 80 percent and 51 percent and growing. Illiteracy fell by 20 percent in ten years. Indeed, the economic prosperity of individuals—despite the absence of an economic infrastructure either now or at any time in the past—is astonishing. So are any other number of indicators of educational and economic well-being.

Of course, the Arab citizens of the territories are not as privileged or as comfortable or as free as their Israeli counterparts, but they are far more so than their Arab brethren elsewhere. As the region stands now, the differences in culture and development, which range from discrepancies in the possession of refrigerators to divergent attitudes toward political choices and peace settlements, need better understanding without the cloud of apocalyptic scorn that lies just below the surface of Benvenisti's analysis. It took centuries for Germany and France, without such vast cultural differences between them, to reach some measure of understanding over territory and boundaries.

But for the alienated Israeli intellectuals and their followers abroad, for all who yearn for the

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lost utopian visions and the lost plans for the New Jew, the reality of contemporary Israel with all its challenges and problems cannot match the dreams once held, the messianic belief—for such it is—that socialism and social engineering practiced on immigrants could overnight make a new society, the false belief that the narrow and intolerant passions of *moledet* and *hagshama* made one humanly superior to those religious Jews whom Benvenisti scorns with all his soul and all his might. He is still riding on that bus in Haifa, still sneering at lesser mortals with urban mud on their shoes and the trials of daily life on their minds, still ready to give the order to his countrymen to empty their water supplies on the desert floor in penance and march to Ein Gedi or be damned.

THE rejection of Labor Zionism at the polls in 1977 was not just an assertion of power by Sephardi Jews and Jews of Arab lands; it was in part a rejection of the attitudes and perspectives that characterize Benvenisti and his generation and their heirs among the still-entrenched Labor intellectuals, attitudes set out with almost frightening clarity in *Conflicts and Contradictions*. The Likud coalition grew out of Revisionist Zionism, and once in power it revisited or attempted to revisit upon its Labor rivals all the pent-up resentments of forty years of political struggle.

But Likud's future is also uncertain, because its motivations, no less than those of Labor, are similarly based in the past. Meanwhile Labor intellectuals like Benvenisti continue to dominate the ideological discussion and set the cultural agenda, both in Israel and in the Diaspora. As long as this is allowed to remain the case, the national debate in Israel will remain arrested at the level of the youthful fixations of Meron Benvenisti and his peers.

Fiction

Post-Counterculture Tristesse

Carol Iannone

TO JUDGE by the work of some of our younger novelists, the American dream has died even while coming true. Material prosperity, sexual liberation, unparalleled expansion of personal choice—these often make their way into contemporary fiction more as problems, dilemmas, or occasions of anguish than as the victories for the human spirit they are usually claimed to be.

Of course in some way or other fiction should rub against the grain of the age, but our younger writers do not, for the most part, challenge the terms of our liberated culture. Accepting these terms as given—even at times celebrating them—they devote themselves instead to spare, taut chronicles of the sundry tribulations that are the byproducts of personal and cultural expansion. The tension between their complacent perception of such expansion and the unhappiness occasioned by it can shape both the form and content of their work, as in the cases of David Leavitt and Lorrie Moore, two highly praised young writers who have just published second books.

David Leavitt's first book, *Family Dancing*, an ecstatically praised collection of short stories about affluent suburbia, appeared in 1985 when he was twenty-three, and was nominated for the National Book Critics Circle Award and the PEN/Faulkner Award. Acclaimed by *Esquire* as "a literary leader of a new (and as yet unnamed) generation," Leavitt was asked to write that magazine's decennial "My Generation" essay (previous authors have included the likes of F. Scott Fitzgerald and William Styron). Leavitt also appeared on the cover of the homosexual magazine *Christopher Street* as the "subcultural hero" who was the first to publish explicitly homosexual fiction in the *New Yorker*.

David Leavitt grew up in Palo Alto, California. His father is a professor of organizational behavior at Stanford, his mother an occasional political activist who more than once screamed so violently at the image of Nixon on the TV screen that her son (by his present account) thought she was being murdered. His brother and sister, older than he by nearly a decade, devoted themselves for a while to the "movement."

Leavitt defines his generation as

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the "tail end" of the 60's, coming of age at a time when "disillusion had set in, people had given up, cocaine was the drug of choice." While his siblings' goals at his age "were to expand their minds, see the world, and encourage revolutionary change," his own generation is now "interested in stability, neatness, entrenchment. We want to stay in one place and stay in one piece, establish careers, establish credit." Moreover, "We want good apartments, fulfilling jobs, nice boy/girl friends. We want American Express Gold Cards."

Not, Leavitt makes clear, that any of this marks a return to the 50's. The ideals of *that* age were unceremoniously eroded by the counterculture. "We didn't grow up with the familial stability that people older than us grew up with," he has said; in his own milieu, "divorce was a more common state than marriage."

Without faith in the past or in the family, young people today have little faith in the future. Possessed of an "inability to think beyond the moment," or "to conceive of any future at all," they "refuse to take part" in history. In sum, Leavitt observes: "Our parents imagined they could satisfy [the] urge [for security] by marrying and raising children; our older brothers and sisters through community and revolution. We have seen how far these alternatives go. We trust ourselves and money. Period."

Still, if Leavitt and his contemporaries imagine they have rejected the 60's, they are also its far from reluctant beneficiaries. In Leavitt's case the legacy takes the form of his free and open notions about homosexuality, which were "entirely formed" during his years at Yale. "Yale right now probably has the strongest and most visible gay community of any university in the country," he declared last year in an interview in *Christopher Street*. This holds for girls as well as boys: none of Leavitt's female classmates "seemed to be straight," and "there was an enormous amount of promiscuity" among them. In fact, when Leavitt politicked for gay rights at Yale he was being, he now confesses, "a little hypocritical," because "in terms of the quality of life there things were fine. You could come out there, completely, and be very happy."

THE literary consequences of this somewhat confused and even contradictory set of attitudes are to be seen in Leavitt's two books. "If we are without passion and affect," Leavitt writes of himself and his generation, "it is because we have decided that passion and affect are not worth the trouble." Translated into literary terms, this is another way of saying that a young writer like Leavitt need not bother to create a functional moral framework according to which the actions of his characters will be more than momentarily meaningful, or their miseries more than spasmodically painful, or human suffering in general more than a compelling curiosity. Thus, in the stories of *Family Dancing*, a husband leaves a long-standing marriage with no explanation save "that I'm in love with someone else." A family man turns off the road while driving with his wife and is disabled in the ensuing accident. A man who spends a lot of time abroad refuses his wife's offer to accompany him although she is suffering from cancer. As Leavitt presents them, such actions may or may not strike us as regrettable but are no more subject to rational analysis, to judgment, to "choice," than cancer itself.

As for those left behind in these stories, their pain is depicted, and often graphically, in the bright contactless diction of sensitivity workshops, but it is not explained or understood, let alone transcended, either by the characters or by the author. Fittingly, in "Aliens," the mother of a woman who has survived intact the accident that disabled her husband explains to her daughter that in the Holocaust, the people "who don't need hope to live . . . are the ones who survived."

A central figure in the Leavitt landscape is the rejected or superfluous female, sometimes unmarried, more typically divorced, abandoned, or neglected, a victim, in a sense, of changing cultural patterns. She has often been left for another woman, or for another man, or for more casually miscellaneous reasons like business or travel (or even accident, as in "Aliens"). Leavitt's intricate portrayals of these females' unhappy bewilderment are what his admirers partly have in mind when they wonder how anyone his age could demonstrate so much empathy, understanding, and insight. The truth may be that he rather enjoys detailing—if, again, to no particular literary purpose—the humiliations of women.

In "Territory," for example, a young man brings his gay lover home to meet his liberal mother, only to touch the limits of her tolerance. The mother, whose husband is "a distant sort . . . away often on business," is clearly discomfited by the physical attraction between her son and his lover. But her son "is glad his mother knows that he is desired, glad it makes her flinch." In "The Lost Cottage," a wife of over twenty-six years cannot quite maintain the cool civility expected of her at the dissolution of her marriage, and suddenly blurts out to her children: " 'I love your father, and I will always love your father. And he doesn't love me. And never will. . . . Did you hear me?' She says [to her husband] 'I love you. You can escape me, but you can never escape that.' " The story ends as the husband "keeps his eyes focused on the window above her head, making sure never to look at her. . . . In his mind, he's already left."

Even in the rare case of a remarriage, the misery persists. In the title story, "Family Dancing," Suzanne is throwing a party to celebrate her son's graduation from prep school and also her own "graduation into life—her thirty pounds thinner body, her new house, and her new marriage to Bruce Kaplan, who works in real estate." But the story gradually exposes Suzanne's new life as a sham. She is desperately unhappy, has found her new husband a "disappointment," and still longs for her old husband, Herb, who arrives at the party with his girlfriend. As the night wears on, Suzanne

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grows more frantic, drinks too much, and demands that the reluctant Herb dance with her. She grabs him "firmly around the waist, to make sure he doesn't try to run away from the slow dance. Now, alone in the circle, they writhe, Herb trying to keep his distance, Suzanne insistently holding him down so that his chest pushes against hers."

In "Dedicated," Leavitt's favorite story and the last in the book, femininity itself finally emerges as the problem. A fat, shy, unpopular young woman named Celia is the doggedly faithful friend of a frequently spatting homosexual couple who have been her friends since college. They often stand her up, or ignore her when they are in the distracting presence of other men. One night, when she attempts to accompany one of them to a gay bar and is turned away at the door, she is prompted to reverie:

> "When all the men you love can only love each other," Celia would later tell people—a lot of people—"you can't help but begin to wonder if there's something wrong with being a woman. . . ." That night she stood before those closed steel doors and shut her eyes and wished, the way a small child wishes, that she could be freed from her loose skirts, her makeup and jewelry, her interfering breasts and buttocks. If she could only be stripped and pared, made sleek and svelte like Nathan and Andrew, then she might slip between those doors as easily as the men who hurried past her that night, . . . she might be freed of the rank and untrustworthy baggage of femininity.

"Dedicated" is one of two stories in *Family Dancing* that deal directly with homosexuality and they are both built on a triangular pattern, two male homosexuals and a woman who is somehow left out of their experience. This is also the pattern of Leavitt's recently published novel, *The Lost Language of Cranes*,* which, unlike *Family Dancing*, cannot be said to be even remotely about anything other than homosexuality.

Surprisingly, this fact seems to have caused some consternation among the critics. After years of militant activism that has encouraged homosexuals not only to admit their "sexual preference" but to define themselves by it, some people are still surprised to learn that this is just what they have done. Thus, to the declaration of the main character in this novel that "My sexuality, my attraction to men, is the most crucial, most elemental force in my life," the reviewer in the New York *Times* feebly protested, "Surely there are other tasks for the self to address." At the same time, however, since homosexuality is a form of behavior now considered utterly beyond the pale of moral judgment, the protests never proceeded beyond this altogether respectful point.

To David Leavitt, homosexuality would seem to be the one bright human possibility in a world of misery and compromise. Such, at any rate, is the moral of *The Lost Language of Cranes*, the story of Rose and Owen Benjamin and their son, Philip. Rose and Owen live on the East Side of midtown Manhattan; he is a prep-school admissions officer, she a copy editor. Philip, twenty-five, has his own place and works for a publisher of romances. Philip's main objectives in life are finding love and telling his parents about his homosexuality. For their part, Rose and Owen are worried about eviction from their apartment; their building is going co-op, there is no option to continue renting, and they cannot afford to buy.

While they are preoccupied with this problem, however, a much larger upheaval is occurring in their lives: Owen begins to surface with the truth about *his* homosexuality —which has hitherto found an outlet only in regular Sunday trips to gay porno movie houses. The novel contrasts Philip's pursuit of homosexual love—mainly guilt-free and aboveboard—and his eventual ability to "come out" cleanly to his parents with Owen's sleazy secret life and tormented self-confrontation.

Finally, encouraged by the example of his son and the other successfully functioning homosexuals he now sees all around him, Owen confesses to Rose. She had begun to surmise the secret anyway (and has in fact been unfaithful due to Owen's unsatisfactory conjugal performance), but is nevertheless outraged. Owen then goes to Philip's apartment to tell him the big news and the novel ends with the two settling down for the night—the implication being that from now on Philip rather than Rose will be Owen's chief emotional support.

This awkward and unconvincing ending is perhaps indicative of the problematic shaping of a novel in which men and not women are the objects of pursuit. But there are other problems aplenty. The Benjamins' life together is curiously colorless and limited for a pair of Manhattanites with good educations and reasonably good jobs (Rose attended Smith, Owen has a Ph.D. in Renaissance studies). Moreover, to anyone who has ever been faced with the "co-op problem" it seems quite unlikely that a two-salary family with one child who have lived for years in a rent-stabilized apartment should be unable even to think seriously about buying at an insiders' price. Then, too, it is not clear why Rose is so horrified at the thought of having to move to another borough, since the Benjamins never seem to avail themselves of Manhattan's cultural amenities, unless we count Owen's trips to the porn parlors. In addition, they seem to have no friends, no functioning family besides Philip, and no social life.

The Benjamins' lackluster existence does begin to take on a symbolic role, however, as it is contrasted by Leavitt with that of another "family" in the book, the one belonging to Philip's first serious lover, Eliot. Eliot's now-deceased parents were "important Jewish intellectuals" who died in an automobile accident when he was young. He was subsequently adopted by a loving homosexual couple, and with them enjoyed a splendid childhood. One of his adoptive fathers is a famous writer of wonderful children's books that Philip especially loved as a child. The contented pair live in a sumptuous townhouse where Philip, as Eliot's

* Knopf, 310 pp., $17.95.

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boyfriend, is invited for a marvelous dinner and made to feel warmly welcome. The whole situation, in short, is as idyllic as a tractor romance.

Leavitt eventually and unaccountably drops this subplot, but it has served its purpose: the grim, emotionally exacerbated heterosexual coupling of Rose and Owen cannot compare with the sweet, fructuous sharing of Derek and Geoffrey. Throughout Leavitt's work, indeed, heterosexual relationships, even when not troubled by the hidden homosexuality of the man, are a drab and sterile affair next to the rich possibilities of homosexuality. This is an obvious and fairly serious imaginative flaw. As the twice-rejected female, "the nearly invisible, the unnoticed, the undesired," Rose is treated with the usual Leavitt "compassion," but while she rails against the "self-gratification" of her men and lectures them petulantly that "In my day . . . you did without for the larger good," the tide of history is clearly against her. The heterosexual monopoly is being displaced, even as the Benjamins from their apartment.

As a literary device, the homosexual theme often veers out of Leavitt's aesthetic control. True, he does not flinch from showing us the seamier side of homosexual life, although he does so mainly to justify what can happen when so urgent an impulse is forced underground. But the contrast that emerges in the novel between, in effect, two forms of infantilism—idealized, almost childlike domesticity and disruptive pornographic energy—radically undercuts the seriousness with which Leavitt wants us to regard the homosexual "option." It is as if, for him, the ideal literary form were not so much the novel as the fairy tale, a form in which good and evil are engaged in premoral combat. For that reason alone readers looking for more mature literary satisfactions will inevitably find *The Lost Language of Cranes* a caricature of the real thing.

IN MANY ways, the material dealt with by Lorrie Moore is similar to David Leavitt's: lifeless marriages, bad relationships, infidelity, divorce, lost children, mental breakdown, cancer and other diseases. In short, life as usual on the American scene. To be sure, Miss Moore's focus is more on the heterosexual side of things, but the sexual disorganization of modern life having become so extreme, this provides her with no special coherence or workable aesthetic form. Like Leavitt, too, Miss Moore stays mainly on the hard enameled surface of pain and works proficiently through cumulative detail. But her faculties of judgment are more astringent than his, and her prose tends to be peppy, humorous, wry, and sardonic in contrast to Leavitt's determined seriousness. Finally, whereas Leavitt's baggage of cultural awareness seems to begin with the television age (he ends his *Esquire* essay with what his generation learned from Mary Tyler Moore), Miss Moore actually appears to have read a little, listened to some music, looked at a few paintings, and seen some old movies.

Her first work, a collection of short stories entitled *Self-Help*, originally written as a master's thesis at Cornell, was published in 1985 when she was twenty-eight and widely acclaimed as "a remarkable debut by an original and gifted writer" and the "work of a sorcerer's apprentice." Six of the nine stories are written in the second-person style of self-help manuals: "How to Be an Other Woman," "The Kid's Guide to Divorce," "How" (about a woman who wants to leave an unsatisfying relationship but is stopped for a time when she discovers the man is sick), "How to Talk to Your Mother (Notes)," "Amahl and the Night Visitors: A Guide to the Tenor of Love" (pun intended), and "How to Become a Writer."

Miss Moore seems to be saying with some sarcasm that modern life has grown so complex, its possibilities so multifarious, we are continuously in urgent need of fresh guidance. But the self-help form also mocks the old American idea that we can be steered smoothly through any situation, no matter how trying, painful, or even bizarre (one of the book's epigraphs is a quotation from Amy Vanderbilt on how to shake hands with a man who has lost both arms), as well as the more contemporary notion that we should be able to manage life's vicissitudes, including death, divorce, and all-purpose unhappiness, with the utmost equanimity.

But Miss Moore no more really challenges the etiquette of contemporary manners and mores than does Leavitt. In fact, the forms she has chosen precisely serve her purpose in creating women who are "stylish about their victimization" (as she has put it). Thus, in "How to Be an Other Woman" a bright young college graduate stuck in a secretarial job becomes involved with a more established and professionally successful older man who turns out to be otherwise engaged:

> After four movies, three concerts, and two-and-a-half museums, you sleep with him. It seems the right number of cultural events. . . . He tells you his wife's name. . . . She is an intellectual property lawyer. . . . When he says "How do you feel about that?" don't say "Ridiculous" or "Get the hell out of my apartment." Prop your head up with one hand and say: "It depends. What is intellectual property law?"

The character tries to cope with the situation by making lists—lists of her former lovers, of things to do when she becomes angry with the man, of items in his medicine chest that clearly belong to a woman. She even assesses the relationship itself by means of a list:

> 1. The affair is demeaning.
> 2. Violates decency. Am I just some scampish tart, some tartish scamp?
> 3. No emotional support here.
> 4. Why do you never say "I love you" or "Stay in my arms forever my little tadpole" or "Your eyes set me on fire my sweet nubkin"?

Discovering that there is yet a third woman in his life, she explodes: "Tell him not to smoke in your apartment. Tell him to get out. . . . Slam the door like Bette Davis."

As a narrative device, the self-help "rap" is slyly, unfeelingly agnostic. Miss Moore follows her heroines into messy relationships

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and out of them again, gaining and offering no particular insight in the process. A woman feels she should not abandon a sick man but then leaves anyway, and yet can give no shape to the event:

> A week, a month, a year. The sadness will die like an old dog. You will feel nothing but indifference. The logy whine of a cowboy harmonica, plaintive, weary, it will fade into the hills slow as slow Hank Williams. One of those endings.

Miss Moore's presiding deficiency in *Self-Help* is this willingness to settle for an utter lack of consequence, and it besets her second book, *Anagrams*, as well.* The heroine of this novel, Benna Carpenter, is living through "that awful stage of life from the age of twenty-six to thirty-seven known as *stupidity*. It's when you don't know anything." Appropriately enough, this may be all *we* know for sure in this looking-glass novel. In five separate sections, Miss Moore creates five different lives for Benna, using the same basic set of characters. ("I was inspired by the idea of an anagram," she has explained, "which is the rearrangement of characters to make a new word. What I did was rearrange characters to make new worlds.")

Thus, in her different avatars, Benna is a cocktail-lounge singer, an aerobics instructor, a creative-writing teacher, a suburban housewife, and a mother, sometimes more than one at the same time. A character named Gerard also plays different roles in each section—sometimes a lover, more often a friend—and he too has different occupations. In most of the sections Benna has a delightful six-year-old daughter—but, we are told, she has imagined her—and a friend, Eleanor, smart, tough, witty, over thirty, and overweight.

As best we can make out, Benna has had a rather shriveled, "downwardly mobile" childhood growing up in a trailer, and has lost her mother to a "strange disease." Having completed "only five pages of a dissertation on Miltonic echoes in 19th- and 20th-century children's literature," Benna has dropped out of graduate school and shortly thereafter married, "not because I'd met Mr. Right, but simply because I felt like getting married." Soon she found herself asking, "Where does love go?" The marriage broke up and her husband died an alcoholic soon after. She now works part time at a small upstate community college, teaching poetry workshops to "congenital morons and savages." Although, or perhaps because, she seems to love poetry, she feels herself a "perpetrator of public fraud." An ultimately unsuccessful and rather humiliating affair between Benna and a student, a black veteran of the Vietnam war, causes distress in the Black Women's Equality Group on campus. "My life, what I've lived so far," she observes, "crumbles across its very center and the pieces float off at a slight distance and just stay there, jigsawed, glueless, and dead."

And that's the good news. In her various incarnations, Benna also endures infidelity, betrayal, an abortion, a breast lump, and an impacted wisdom tooth. She tries to invite her father to Thanksgiving but he has a new girlfriend. Gerard dies because of hospital incompetence. Benna loses her job, partly due to budget cuts but perhaps also because of the affair with her student. Determined to take a package-tour Caribbean vacation, she spends the night before departure with her divorced brother Louis who lives in Queens, and discovers that his life is a lonely, failed reflection of her own. "The two of them: How had they come to this?" she ponders. At the novel's end Benna has nothing left but the imagination that has apparently fashioned her different lives and even the daughter who is now her only friend.

The narrative switches back and forth between first and third persons, heightening the dizzy sense of displacement, as does the steady stream of sardonic, sometimes mordant jokes, ranking from standup comedy ("Our sex life is disappearing . . . Gerard goes to the bathroom and I call it 'Shaking Hands with the Unemployed' ") to linguistic wordplay ("Anguish as a Second Language") to Woody Allen mock-philosophy ("What does poetry owe the world? Are we all vagabonds at a cosmic dump or are we just not paying attention?"). As usual in Miss Moore's universe, Benna seems to understand her own defenses—both her self-absorption and her imaginary escapism—but, typically, such knowledge brings no consequence. Near the end of the novel, Benna is "stupid with loneliness, bereft of any truth or wisdom or flicker of poetry, possessed only of the wild glaze of a person who spends entire days making things up."

In a different era this statement might have marked the beginning of a character's true self-confrontation, or at least of an author's confrontation with her material, but in ours it is just the lull before the next imaginary escape. In some ways Benna, at age thirty-three, is like one of David Leavitt's "older siblings" of the 60's, an exemplar of the kind of chronically aimless life typical of that generation of dropouts, early divorce, underemployment, and prolonged childlessness. Miss Moore's remedy for the turmoil of such a life is fantasy, while Leavitt's (in the words of the homosexual Philip Benjamin) is the desire for a "no more pleasurable life than the kind led within the comfy confines of a half-hour situation comedy." Neither of these two young writers seems to have the least understanding of how deeply they thereby signal their thralldom to the impoverished, disordered, and irresolute culture in which they have matured.

* Knopf, 225 pp., $15.95.

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Politician in Uniform

EISENHOWER AT WAR 1943-1945. By DAVID EISENHOWER. *Random House. 977 pp. $29.95.*

Reviewed by EDWARD N. LUTTWAK

BY 1960 or so it was the consensus of military historians that Britain had managed to fight all of World War II with hardly one good general (Slim of Burma was the ritual exception); that the Germans had gained no benefit from a great many, of whom Guderian, Kesselring, Manstein, and Rommel were only the best known; and that the United States had discovered a surprising number of first-rate generals in its minuscule prewar officer corps, from George Marshall, the architect of victory in Washington, to top field commanders such as the solid Omar Bradley, the outrageously talented George Patton, and the brilliant Douglas MacArthur, to an entire crop of more junior men of obvious quality.

Only Dwight D. Eisenhower was not on anyone's list of the talented, for indeed he had demonstrated no perceptible qualities of generalship. That he had not been a battle leader like Matthew Ridgway was not held against him, because he had been placed too high in the hierarchy to begin with; that he had not shown operational brilliance in the manner of Patton was also a moot point, because he had held no operational commands, having started at the next level above that, as theater commander in the Mediterranean. But it was precisely his performance at that level which evoked no admiration from the majority of military historians.

A theater commander is not supposed to lead his men in combat or control battle decisions, but it is his task to work out a scheme of action for the campaign as a whole, within which battles are planned and fought to achieve victory in that theater of war. MacArthur's "island-hopping" campaign was one such scheme; Manstein's Ardennes penetration of 1940 was another; the Soviet double envelopment of the German Army Group Center in 1944 was yet a third. In each case, a certain intellectual ability was needed to devise a scheme containing some ingenuity if possible, some element of dislocation and surprise, but certainly providing for a maximal focusing of efforts to achieve the objective; next, there was a more sustained struggle of the will, throughout the planning process and campaign preparations, to protect that disciplined concentration of effort against the inevitable demands to cover every contingency, to try every other path of advance as well.

In MacArthur's case, *some* islands were to be seized by hard fighting if necessary, but many more were to be bypassed; in Manstein's plan, nine-tenths of German armor was to be sent through just one sector of the Anglo-French front, to bisect it, leaving the rest of the German army practically without armor; and Army Group Center was destroyed by the concentration of Soviet tank forces in the major pincers of envelopment, depriving other sectors of armor they could well have used.

Eisenhower never formulated any such campaign scheme. Under his command, in North Africa and Sicily as well as France, all available combat forces were just sent forward in a broad array, according to the amphibious shipping at hand for the initial landings, then the capacity of roads for the advance from the beaches, then the flow of supplies to sustain every possible vector of advance. There was no intellectual striving on his part to work out a disciplined focusing of efforts, and therefore no resistance to their dissipation in the aftermath. (Even the scarcest of all Allied resources for the 1944 entry into France, the landing craft and especially the tank-landing ships, were distributed between Normandy and the south of France, for the August "Anvil" landings.)

Nor can Eisenhower claim any of the credit for the very successful deceptions that masked the major front-opening amphibious landings: "Torch" into North Africa, "Husky" for Sicily, and "Overlord" as well as "Anvil" into France. In each case it was the British who devised and executed the elaborate intrigues that persuaded the Germans that the Allies would land somewhere else.

It was the British who right from the start in 1940 did not merely arrest and execute German spies, but rather turned them and kept them broadcasting for future use, long before any return to Europe could be planned; it was the British who devised the deceptive operations of which "Mincemeat," the dead British officer washed ashore in German-infiltrated Spain with phony invasion plans for Corsica and Greece, is only the most famous; it was the British who masterminded the huge "Fortitude" misdirection, which kept up the pretense that the real landings would come in the Pas de Calais, with Normandy successfully presented as a mere feint; and it was the British who had made the huge investment in the Ultra codebreaking (employing more than 30,000 people) which made it possible to *rely* on deception, in the virtually certain knowledge that it was effective.

Unfortunately it was also the British who made it quite impossible for Eisenhower to exercise any real generalship as a theater commander. It was Churchill's nonstop campaign to have the Germans and Russians bleed each other even more, by making only peripheral entries into the Balkans instead of any major offensive at all, that forced the Americans from Marshall down to direct all *their* efforts toward the choice of France as the major theater—even if one price they had to pay was to pre-

EDWARD N. LUTTWAK *is senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University. His new book,* Strategy, *will be published by Harvard in May. He is now working, with Walter Laqueur, on a history of World War II.*

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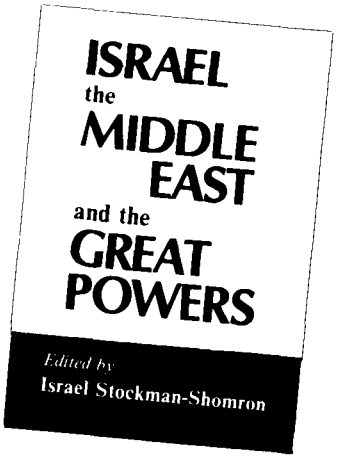

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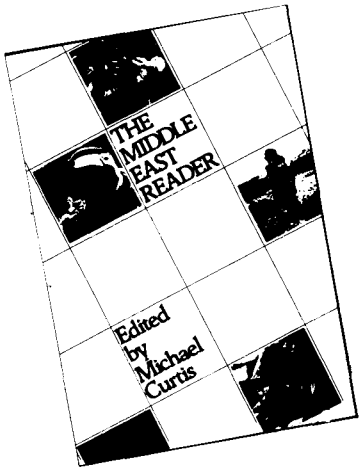

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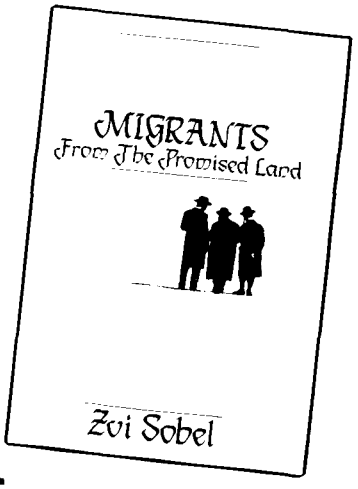

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clude any sharp priority for the campaign fought within the theater.

OSTENSIBLY, Churchill's intention was to invade Central Europe from the south (the "soft underbelly") so as to deny Stalin the conquest of Vienna, Prague, and Berlin, the nefarious consequences of which Churchill certainly anticipated. But that was only a sham, meant to conceal a more modest ambition. As the architect of the Gallipoli disaster in World War I, Churchill knew full well that landings in Greece, Yugoslavia, or even northern Italy would *not* lead to Vienna, let alone Prague or Berlin, but rather to a stalemate in the Balkan mountain country or on the first slopes of the Alps. Even before Kesselring's defense of the lesser mountains of central Italy definitely proved the point, it was clear that in mountain fighting the Allied superiority in airpower would not help much, that Allied superiority in armor would hardly count at all, and that the Germans could therefore be defeated only very slowly (much too slowly to outpace Stalin), *if* they were badly outnumbered. It was simply a fact that one German soldier was worth three or four Allied soldiers in infantry combat until the very last weeks of the war—a fact well known to the British who had never defeated the Germans on anything resembling equal terms.

Churchill and his military advisers calculated that if stretched to reach across the Mediterranean, Allied shipping would limit the scale of the forces that could be inserted in the first place and sustained thereafter. Knowing also that the "underbelly" was not soft at all, they therefore deliberately set out to create the conditions for a stalemate, to keep the United States engaged in the European war, even while the Germans and Stalin's troops would actually be doing the fighting and dying (along with those trapped under German rule in the meantime).

Eisenhower valiantly served the American Chiefs of Staff in their successful resistance to the British scheme for such a waiting war. The Chiefs combined the threat to turn the American main effort to the Pacific with many concessions to the British at the theater level. One was to tolerate the irresolute Briton Alexander as supreme commander in Italy, over the untalented but determined American Clark; another was to tolerate Montgomery, who applied at the operational and tactical levels the casualty-avoiding strategy that dominated British policy. Montgomery's caution was sometimes grotesque (his invasion of Calabria from Sicily was pure *opera buffa* complete with a very heavy artillery barrage on a handful of Italian troops eager to surrender), and it always resulted in very elaborately prepared and very slow battles fought with the largest consumption of Allied means to obtain very modest results. His generalship was mediocre at best (we now know that the Germans were so badly outgunned and immobile at El Alamein that their defeat was a foregone conclusion; and that Montgomery's failure to trap Rommel's forces was inexcusable); and his extreme arrogance was justifiably infuriating to his American counterparts Bradley and Patton.

EISENHOWER, who had once served as a staff aide to MacArthur, may have lacked military talents but he certainly knew how to handle a prima donna, and indeed several; he was remarkable for his diplomatic abilities, political sensitivity, and equally for his patience and almost superhuman self-restraint. Thus he was eminently suited for dealing with the Air Corps, still part of the Army but increasingly independent; the Navy; the Canadians, who could be difficult at times; the French, who were always difficult; and above all the British, both to deflect Churchill's scheme and to assuage the tacit (and not so tacit) British resentment at being ever more clearly the junior partners in the Alliance. The soothing President-to-come, of reassuringly benign disposition, was presaged by the politician in uniform, who did much to keep the Alliance together by his personal qualities—and by refraining from the sharp decisions that a general in command of a theater of war must make.

After Normandy, both Montgomery advancing in the north and Bradley advancing in the center (with Patton leading the way) insistently demanded a clear priority in supplies to mount a concentrated thrust straight into the heart of Germany. If Eisenhower had chosen to support one or the other, he would have acted as a general should, but then he would have been a very poor inter-Allied politician. The British would not have tolerated the confinement of Montgomery to a holding action in order to allow Patton to run forward; but if the flow of fuel and ammunition had gone to Montgomery's forces, their advance would have been as infuriatingly slow as it was in North Africa, Sicily, Calabria, Normandy, and finally Germany even at the very end of the war, against forces grossly depleted and on the verge of collapse.

Eisenhower's political talents unfortunately did not extend beyond the almost domestic inter-Allied sphere. He clearly had no notion of what Soviet power in Central Europe would mean once the war was over. Indeed, he totally misunderstood the political character of the Soviet Union. In 1945, after VE day, almost one year after Stalin not only had refused to assist the Polish uprising in Warsaw, but had also cold-bloodedly refused permission for Anglo-American transport aircraft to land on Soviet soil after dropping supplies to the beleaguered Poles (condemning the effort to futility, since very little could be carried in two-way unrefueled flights), Eisenhower talked about the Soviet Union with his aide, Harry C. Butcher: "Eisenhower remarked that Allied-Soviet relations were 'at the same stage of arms-length dealing that marked the early Anglo-American contacts in 1940.' He recalled that Anglo-American understanding had evolved slowly, but after a while the Americans and British had become 'allies in spirit as well as on paper.' He hoped that wider contacts with the Russians would accomplish the same."

Quoting these statements, David

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Eisenhower goes on to suggest that Eisenhower said what he said to Butcher because it "would be evaluated politically"—in other words, that Eisenhower did not mean what he said here. That implies an excess of cunning even for a man who had much of it, and much of it low (cf. his betrayal of Marshall). Were it not for the constancy with which the same inanity about the Soviet Union and the same feckless hopes still persist quite widely today, after decades of further education at the hands of the Kremlin, one could denounce Eisenhower's political ignorance—as one can certainly reject any claim of military talent made for him, David Eisenhower's 822 pages of text to the contrary notwithstanding.

THERE is no doubt that Eisenhower has been the beneficiary of a nostalgic reappraisal in which his mediocrity is positively viewed as an indication of sound common sense, and his steady cunning in pursuit of his own advancement in and out of uniform is taken as evidence of wisdom. (One may detect a sinister undertone in this uncritical nostalgia reminiscent of the innumerable British celebrations of the Battle of Britain that have attended Britain's steady decline.) David Eisenhower's biographical study of his grandfather (the first of a projected three-volume work) has likewise benefited from the indulgence of reviewers, but it is in fact a very bad book.

While he adds to the published evidence a smattering of childhood memories, some haphazard interviews, odd bits and pieces from the unpublished portion of the Butcher diaries (published in 1946 under the title *My Three Years With Eisenhower*) and from the Eisenhower papers, David Eisenhower has simply failed to make proper use of the vast literature of military history on his theme in order to provide the necessary context. A grandfilial biographer who is not himself a historian cannot be criticized for not having mastered the enormous mass of specialized monographs and journal articles that bear on his subject. But he should certainly have made use of the most important and easily accessible published works of recognized documentary merit. Instead we find him relying on mass-market books that are seriously misleading.

Thus, for example, because David Eisenhower has obtained his information on the deception schemes from *Bodyguard of Lies* by the journalist Anthony Cave Brown, his references to deception contain numerous errors. As for Ultra, that crucial source of intelligence on German military intentions and orders, David Eisenhower inexcusably relies on F.W. Winterbotham's early and undocumented memoir instead of on the three solid volumes of the official history of British intelligence by F.H. Hinsley *et al.*, on Ronald Lewin's *Ultra Goes to War*, and on Ralph Bennett's *Ultra in the West*. Does the publisher of a work of such dimensions and guaranteed profitability have no duty to impose even minimal standards of research upon an author?

Islam vs. Jewry

SEMITES AND ANTI-SEMITES: AN INQUIRY INTO CONFLICT AND PREJUDICE. By BERNARD LEWIS. *Norton. 283 pp. $18.95.*

Reviewed by ROBERT S. WISTRICH

"BY FOLLOWING daily events in the occupied land, we get day-after-day proof beyond any doubt that what is termed 'Zionist racism' is just an extension of talmudic teachings and development of the same teachings. As the Jews refuse to dwell in the same home with a non-Jew, so the society of the bigger ghetto refuses to live

ROBERT S. WISTRICH *is currently visiting professor at the Oxford Center for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies. His books include* The Left Against Zion *and* Socialism and the Jews.

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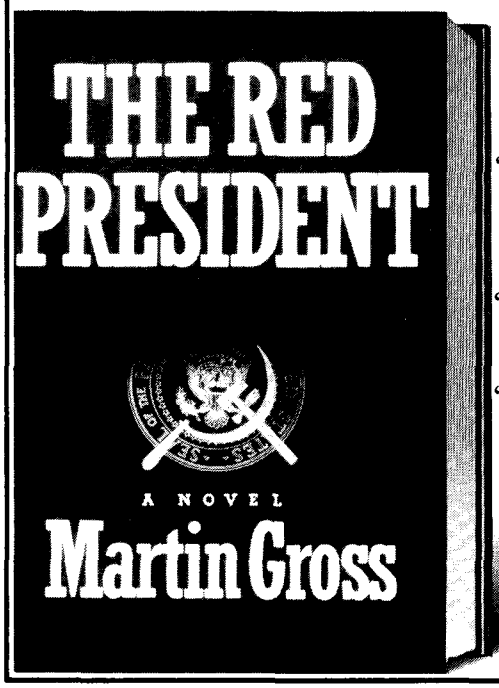

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in the same house with other societies." This statement, from the book *The Matzah of Zion* by Mustafa Tlas, currently the Defense Minister of Syria, provides a striking confirmation of one of Bernard Lewis's major themes in his latest work: namely, the ways in which the revival of anti-Semitism at the highest levels of contemporary Arab regimes and in the ranks of the Arab intelligentsia is exacerbating hatred and extremism in the Middle East. Tlas's assertion, and others to be found in Lewis's book itself, also give the lie to the official Arab stand that the Arab states are only anti-Israel and anti-Zionist, but not anti-Jewish.

In point of fact, as Lewis demonstrates here in lucid and elegant prose, and with a rare kind of unflappable urbanity that veils the passionate, controversial nature of his subject matter, "classical anti-Semitism is an essential part of Arab intellectual life at the present time." What is more, the current eruption of anti-Semitism in the Arab world is, we learn here, not confined to the margins of society; rather, its influence is extensive and at times pervasive. If the Arab-Israel conflict is not quickly resolved, Lewis concludes, there may be no escape "from the unending downward spiral of mutual hate that will embitter the lives of Arabs and Jews alike."

Lewis's central thesis is that anti-Semitism is a relatively new phenomenon in Muslim lands, having arrived there in the 19th century mainly through Greek Orthodox and Catholic Arabs influenced by European and especially French anti-Semitic literature. Then, in the course of the 20th century, as a result of the conflict over Palestine and the impact of the West—in particular of Nazi and fascist models—Muslim Arabs became infected with European Christian and ultimately racist anti-Semitism. Today, in its vehemence, ubiquity, and obsessiveness, the Arab variant, while lacking the personal, visceral quality of its European forerunners, is reminiscent of Nazi anti-Semitism.

While broadly agreeing with Lewis on this last point—indeed, in my own recent book, *Hitler's Apocalypse: Jews and the Nazi Legacy*, I have suggested something similar from a different starting-point—I believe that one can argue with some of his explanations as to how it has come about.

IT SEEMS to me, first, that Lewis somewhat downplays the significance of the legal disabilities, humiliations, and persecution inherent in the "protected" (*dhimmi*) status of the Jews under Islam in the *premodern* era. The documentation provided in books like Bat Ye'or's *The Dhimmi* or Norman Stillman's *The Jews of Arab Lands* suggests that Muslim prejudices against Jews were a good deal more serious than Lewis implies by the phrase, "compatible with human relations and even with the beginnings of a political dialogue." Not that Lewis accepts the Arab myth of an interdenominational utopia before the rise of Zionism or that, in his own recent book, *The Jews of Islam*, he paints the life of the *dhimmi* as especially rosy. But in the present work he does tend a little too readily to relegate the sufferings of non-Muslims under Islam to the category of common, conventional, or even "normal" prejudice.

No doubt, the Jews were more marginal to Muslim than to medieval Christian theology; no doubt, too, Islam lacked a deicide myth, and Muhammad, unlike Jesus, emerged victorious from his encounter with the Jews. One can even agree with Lewis that the myths of the Jew as ritual murderer, as poisoner of wells, as satanic conspirator, and as agent of cosmic evil striving for world domination are distinctively Christian and European in provenance. Nevertheless, we may legitimately ask whether *on the ground*, and at the level of intercommunal relations, the fate of Jewish communities under Islam was that much better than their everyday experience in the Christian world. Certainly by the late 18th and early 19th century, as Lewis himself acknowledges, Jews were subjected to a level of degradation in North Africa and the Middle East that suggested precious little difference. Indeed, as time went on, the Jews of Muslim lands were increasingly dependent for their protection and sustenance on the intervention of their more fortunate brethren in the Christian West!

I raise this point because it seems to me that in this book Lewis has slightly overstated the impact of Christian-European influences on Arab anti-Semitism and neglected its more local and indigenous roots. This is ironic, because few scholars are as aware as Lewis himself of the centrality of Islam in modern Arab ideologies and cultural traditions. It is not just a matter of the harsh anti-Jewish expressions in the Qur'an, or of the tendentious use of those expressions by contemporary Arab and Muslim ideologues in the war against Zionism. It is, rather, a question of the entire tradition of religious supremacy and triumphalism in Islam, as well as the related belief in Arab political superiority—notions which have profoundly shaped attitudes to Jews and Judaism. If Arab Judeophobia were not able to draw on such a rich legacy of Islamic religious literature and teaching, together with a long history of institutional discrimination, it is surely doubtful whether the integration of anti-Semitic themes from medieval Christian, populist, and Nazi sources could have proceeded so smoothly and effectively.

As Lewis rightly emphasizes, in the modern period these themes have been "Islamicized," but for precisely that reason one fears that they may enjoy considerably more popularity in the Muslim world than he would wish to believe. Whether the anti-Semitism really comes from above rather than below, whether it can be switched off at will, whether dialogue *à la* Sadat can reduce the level of hatred remains a moot point. The openly anti-Semitic agitation taking place in the organs of the Egyptian opposition ever since the peace treaty with Israel is not encouraging in this regard. Indeed, Lewis's hopes—which all men of good will must share—seem to be contradicted by his own graphic account of the popular cult that has developed in Egypt around Sulayman Khatir, the soldier who murdered defense-

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less Israeli women and children at Ras Burqa a year and a half ago.

THIS brings me, finally, to Lewis's treatment of the Arab-Israel conflict, which he regards as being essentially political—"a clash between states and peoples over real issues, not a matter of prejudice and persecution." Yet in this book Lewis is concerned, precisely, not with the rights and wrongs of the conflict or with the "real issues" but rather with the myths, confusions, prejudices, and hatreds it has engendered. He fears (with ample justification) that the conflict is being escalated by the poisonous anti-Jewish rhetoric which currently contaminates the body of Islam. (Interestingly enough, Lewis warned of this danger fifteen years ago, but did not then regard it as imminent.)

I agree with Lewis, and feel that his book is a timely, important, and powerful warning. At the same time, it does not seem to me altogether credible to depict this anti-Jewish hostility as predominantly a function of the war with Israel. It is not by accident that the Islamic fundamentalists (whom Lewis, significantly, does not discuss at any great length), drawing for the most part on classical Muslim sources, can depict the Jew as an enemy of the Muslims and an agent of dark forces of evil. Just as notions of Jewish treachery, subversion, cruelty, and malevolence did not need to be brought in from the outside, neither did they require the emergence of Zionism and Israel for their articulation. As Lewis is well aware, Jews were traditionally seen as persecutors of the prophets and perverters of Allah's truth, as deniers of the Islamic revelation and conspirators against the Islamic mission. It was the challenge to these conventional notions of Jewish lowliness and depravity —a challenge that itself came from the modern, secularizing West—which so upset traditional hierarchies of thought and created the background against which an updated Islamic anti-Semitism could flourish. Israel, with its unexpected military triumphs over the humiliated descendants of an ancient warrior-faith, was the last straw in a long chain of traumatic defeats, which had their roots in a failure to adapt successfully to modernity.

Disagreements aside, however, *Semites and Anti-Semites* remains a very important contribution to the general literature on 20th-century anti-Semitism, and especially its Muslim-Arab brand, to the study of which Bernard Lewis brings an erudite, inquiring, and far-ranging mind.

The Constitution & Us

A MACHINE THAT WOULD GO OF ITSELF: THE CONSTITUTION IN AMERICAN CULTURE. By MICHAEL KAMMEN. *Knopf. 532 pp. $29.95.*

Reviewed by WALTER BERNS

MICHAEL KAMMEN, the Newton C. Farr Professor of American History and Culture at Cornell University, describes this book as a study in popular constitutionalism, by which he means "the perceptions and misperceptions, uses and abuses, knowledge and ignorance of ordinary Americans" concerning the Constitution of the United States. As he says, there is a vast literature "in the traditional field of constitutional history—including works on the Supreme Court, biographies of Justices, so-called biographies of the Constitution, and pertinent aspects of American legal history—[but] no one has attempted to describe the place of the Constitution in the public consciousness and symbolic life of the American people." "How," he asks, "has the [American] society felt about its frame of government? (When it has felt or thought about it at all.)"

Well, as one might expect, ordinary Americans—"not lawyers, nor judges, nor professors of constitutional law"—are not going to indicate how they "feel" about the Constitution unless they have some particular reason to do so. This becomes clear early in Kammen's account. Ordinary Americans are not going to engage in debates on the constitutionality of the protective

WALTER BERNS *is John M. Olin University Professor at Georgetown University.*

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tariff, certainly not debates on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Nor are they going to dispute—not publicly, at least—the relative strengths and weaknesses of the American and British constitutions, or enter into debates with such famous Englishmen as Thomas Babington Macaulay and Walter Bagehot. They are not even likely to mount campaigns to "save" the Constitution, either from Franklin D. Roosevelt or from the Supreme Court.

All of which is to say that Kammen's story features not "ordinary Americans," but well-known, even famous, Americans: Senators Daniel Webster and Robert Y. Haynes; James Fenimore Cooper; Henry Cabot Lodge; A. Lawrence Lowell; James M. Beck (28 index entries); Professors Charles A. Beard (16 index entries), Thomas Reed Powell, Edward S. Corwin; Leonard Wood, army general; Nicholas Murray Butler, university president; and Elihu Root, lawyer, statesman, Nobel laureate.

The point is, ordinary Americans are more than likely to be dependent on others for their thoughts—if perhaps not their "feelings"—about the Constitution. Kammen describes their attitude as a "curious blend of reverence and ignorance," and makes it clear in the first chapter that they are not themselves altogether responsible for the ignorance. Indeed, events seem to have conspired to promote it among them. The Founders, he points out, thought they were writing a Constitution that would be fully comprehensible to the people, but no sooner was it in place than they began to quarrel among themselves as to its meaning—concerning slavery, taxes, treason, and, for one more example, the power of Congress to incorporate a bank. And that disagreement continues today. Then there is what Kammen calls the "mystique" of the Supreme Court, its reluctance to explain its procedures, its refusal to make public its proceedings, and, for much of its history, the failure of the press to cover it adequately. Then, in the early years especially, ordinary Americans were poorly served by publicists whose textbooks tended to be "unclear, superficial, inconsistent, and inaccurate."

Kammen's method—and for this especially he deserves to be praised—is to distinguish between the Constitution and the Supreme Court; to employ his formulation, he does not share the common "propensity to conflate the Court and the Constitution." The consequence is a history not of the Court, not of constitutional law, but, uniquely, of the Constitution itself: how the physical document was kept out of British hands in 1814—by being loaded, along with other official papers, in "coarse linen sacks" and carried, first, to a grist mill a few miles above Chain Bridge on the Virginia side of the Potomac, and then to Leesburg, where it was "locked in an unoccupied house, and the keys entrusted to a Reverend Mr. Littlejohn"; how it has been taught in the schools, explained in texts, manuals, even catechisms; how it has served as symbol as well as instrument of government; how it has been displayed; how it has been celebrated (in 1837, 1887, 1937); and, of course, how it has been misunderstood by ordinary Americans.

Ordinary Americans do figure in the book, as members of the crowds lining the streets on celebratory occasions, but mainly as objects of concern because of their presumed ignorance of the Constitution's structure and provisions. "Popular ignorance of the meaning of the Constitution is appalling," said one leader of the New York Bar Association; "God knows how dearly we need a constitutional revival," said Senator William E. Borah in 1924. Out of these concerns came the designation of September 17 as Constitution Day and, within a few years, a Constitution Week, as well as a number of programs of public instruction sponsored by the bar associations, National Security League, American Rights League, American Defense Society, and even the Boy Scouts of America. With its eye on the future, the Immigration and Naturalization Service established an "Americanization Service" which prepared constitutional catechisms for the use of immigrants applying for citizenship. When tested, however—at least, if Kammen's examples are at all typical—the immigrants proved to be more ignorant than the "ordinary Americans." Question: "Name the three branches of the U.S. government." Answer: "Deduction, Reduction—I don't know the third." Question: "In case the President dies during his term of office, who becomes President?" Answer: "George Washington."

But the answers are not always foolish. Question: "What is the advantage of having local government such as city and state?" Answer: "The President can't watch everything." Precisely. Question: "Name some of the important duties of a citizen." Answer: "Love your neighbor." Which is to say, love your fellow citizen; good counsel, that. One Goldie Sokoloff brought her examination to an end by pleading, "Please Mister, don't ask me any more questions as I want to be a citizen and I don't know any answers." One hopes she made it, and that she became an ordinary American; ordinary Americans tend to be good citizens.

This brings us to an aspect of his subject Kammen neglects to discuss. Like Goldie Sokoloff, ordinary Americans do not score well on constitutional tests but they think well of the Constitution and, partly no doubt as a consequence, they happily and habitually accept the limits imposed by it on their political power. This, surely, deserves some place in a study of the Constitution's "cultural impact." It is, in fact, the sort of "impact" James Madison hoped and worked for. In accord with his populist proclivities, Madison's friend and colleague Thomas Jefferson had proposed that questions of constitutionality be submitted directly to the people, not the courts; Madison objected. Writing in *Federalist* 49, he said that every appeal to the people "would carry an implication of some defect in the government, [and] frequent appeals would, in great measure, deprive the government of that veneration which time bestows on everything, and without which perhaps the wisest and freest governments would not possess the requisite stability." And he ends the paragraph by saying that even the most rational government "will not find it

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a superfluous advantage to have the prejudices of the community on its side."

On the whole, then, and especially considering the instructors Kammen probably has in mind (Anthony Lewis, for example), I think we would be well advised to leave ordinary Americans alone. Better to concentrate on the law schools, where the Constitution has not been studied for years.

It is only in the last few pages that Kammen becomes the liberal partisan rather than the historian of culture. In the 1930's, liberals proposed to curb the "conservative" Supreme Court by authorizing the President to appoint up to six additional Justices, or by authorizing Congress, by a two-thirds vote, to reenact laws declared unconstitutional by the Court, or by enacting legislation forbidding the Court to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional except with the concurrence of seven of the nine members. Kammen reports these events with the sort of detachment we have come to expect from historians of culture; the most he is willing to say is that "a fair number of liberals and many Democrats had grave misgivings" about these proposals.

But when he comes to recent proposals to curb the "liberal" Court by depriving it of jurisdiction in cases involving school prayer, abortion, busing, and the like, Kammen drops his scholarly mask; he regards such proposals, he tells us, as "outrageous." That Congress might properly do this or, indeed, that the Court's power even to hear a case or controversy depends on an express grant of jurisdiction by the Congress, is, he says in the concluding chapter, an opinion held only by "extremists."

Well, not quite; in fact, not by a long shot. Here, from a case decided in 1949, is Justice Felix Frankfurter on this subject: "Congress need not establish inferior courts; Congress need not grant the full scope of jurisdiction which it is empowered to vest in them; Congress need not give this Court any appellate power; it may withdraw appellate jurisdiction once conferred and it may do so even while a case is sub judice." Of course, Frankfurter's is not the last word on the subject, but neither is it the word of an extremist.

In sum, this is a book packed with little-known information and some fascinating discoveries. And, except for the last few pages, it can also serve as a model for cultural historians.

Legend

FIDEL. By PETER G. BOURNE. *Dodd, Mead. 332 pp. $18.95.*

FIDEL: A CRITICAL PORTRAIT. By TAD SZULC. *Morrow. 703 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by LUIS E. AGUILAR

IT IS probably best that living legends, particularly living revolutionary legends, not live *too* long. Ideally, they should die early enough so that future biographers can ponder how much better the world would be today if they had been given time to realize their dreams.

Had Fidel Castro died in the 60's—say, during the Bay of Pigs invasion, or after the fiery Declaration of Havana, or alongside Che Guevara in the Bolivian Andes—his legend today would exceed all bounds of glory. The early 60's were, after all, propitious times for Castro to have burst onto the world arena. European intellectuals, disillusioned by Soviet brutality in Hungary and by Khrushchev's revelations of the crimes of Stalin, were eager to welcome fresh heroes from the "Third World." Jean-Paul Sartre ecstatically hailed Frantz Fanon's anti-Western book, *The Wretched of the Earth*; Africa had become a "beloved continent"; Sukarno of Indonesia was proclaimed a model leader, Jawaharlal Nehru a fount of wisdom (and fashion). In the United States, too, students and their elders, including many who should have known better, began to enjoy the exhilaration of revolutionism.

LUIS E. AGUILAR, *a new contributor, is a professor of history at Georgetown University. He is the author of* Cuba 1933: Prologue to Revolution.

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Into this atmosphere stepped Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, and became instant saints. Since no one knew much or cared to learn much about Cuba B.C. (before Castro), the revolutionary propaganda promulgated by the new regime was enthusiastically accepted and endorsed. Fidel, it was said, had saved his people from starvation under Batista and from U.S. imperialism. A "new socialist man," generous, unselfish, noble, was being created in revolutionary Cuba.

Jean-Paul Sartre visited Havana and was duly impressed by the young, charismatic leader. Herbert L. Matthews, the New York *Times* correspondent who had "discovered" Castro when he was a rebel in the mountains, announced that Fidel had triggered an unstoppable world revolution that would soon sweep across the United States itself. "Those who seek to hold it back are fighting a lost cause," warned Matthews. "They are trying to preserve a world that has been doomed." Castro represented youth, socialism (with a human face), revolution without repression, the very wave of the future.

Almost three decades have passed since that revolutionary dawn. Castro, who has ruled Cuba with an iron hand, is now over sixty years old. More than a million Cubans are in exile. Despite massive Soviet support, the island's economy is a disaster. Eleven years of participation in a war in Angola have taken their toll, as have the costs of maintaining a formidable military machine. A police state hovers in watch over the population. Cuban prisons are a horror only too amply attested (most recently by Armando Valladares in *Against All Hope*).

Castro's latest speeches have consisted of angry denunciations of costly errors, general apathy, and growing corruption in Cuba. By his present description, indeed, the "new socialist man" sounds like nothing so much as the old corrupt bourgeois man. The only "solutions" the Cuban leader seems capable of offering amount to demands for further sacrifice and discipline.

Most European and American intellectuals who initially supported the revolution have become disillusioned. Some deserted the cause in 1968, when Castro applauded the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, others (including Sartre) with the 1971 crackdown on writers and homosexuals. Most quietly left when it became no longer possible to deny the reality of a Soviet-style dictatorship in Cuba.

THE time would thus seem ripe for an objective analysis of Castro and what he has created. But legends die hard, at least to judge by these two recent biographies by Peter G. Bourne and Tad Szulc. There are many weaknesses common to both books: vague references to unidentifiable sources, striking generalizations, lack of solid historical background. But perhaps the basic problem is that, in different degrees, the authors seem reluctant to renounce old illusions about Castro and his revolution. Their criticisms—and they do have some—are softened throughout by a flow of praise.

Peter Bourne, a psychiatrist who served in the Carter administration, mentions Castro's unlovely personality traits only to explain them away. "The mutilation of the Cuban national psyche over generations," he writes, "was substantial"; "atrocities by Cubans on Cubans enhanced their feelings of worthlessness." No wonder, he continues, that "Cuba, at the midpoint of the 20th century, waited expectantly for a man who could produce a sense of national pride . . . who would stand up to the U.S. . . who could give them back their self-respect. . . . If such a man appeared, most Cubans were ready to accept him as a messiah."

But Bourne's effort to interpret Fidel by way of the couch fails—not only because of his obvious devotion to the patient, an unforgivable sin in psychoanalysis, but also because of his amazing ignorance of Cuban history. In his introduction alone Bourne accumulates enough errors in a few paragraphs to fill several pages of corrections. Thus he asserts that Cuban General Maceo, leader of the army of independence in 1898, was "on the verge of capturing Havana" when he was killed, and that the "rebels also declined, with the hard victory imminent, an offer of the United States to intervene on their side." But not only was General Maceo not the main leader of the Cuban army of independence; neither he nor any Cuban commander was ever on the verge of capturing Havana, or any other important Cuban city. Moreover, victory was far from "imminent" (the Cubans were as exhausted as Spain), the United States made no offer to intervene on the side of the rebels, and when the United States finally did intervene in the war, after three years of hard fighting, most Cuban rebels initially welcomed the move. Bourne's book is chock-a-block with such errors.

IN HIS own lengthy "portrait," Tad Szulc similarly submerges the negative aspects of Castro's character, this time in an interminable paean to his charisma, energy, wisdom, courage, and generosity. More than 200 pages are devoted by Szulc to a loving description of Castro's early years, only 54 to his "maturity." The reader is thus spared no detail of the Fidel legend. We are told repeatedly that he has been brave since childhood, has a splendid memory, an overwhelming personality, and encyclopedic knowledge. Castro, Szulc writes, can dazzle bishops with his theological arguments, economists with his command of statistics, intellectuals with philosophical insight, and gourmets with recipes. Such a scholar is he that during the guerrilla campaigns in the mountains he sometimes issued his orders in Latin! True, Szulc concedes, Castro is a poor poet—but even so he won a first prize in poetry once by simply charming the jury. In short, by Szulc's account Castro deserves to bear the motto of a Spanish knight of the 16th century, *Excedió a todos en todo*: he exceeds everyone in everything.

Despite his unbounded admiration, Szulc does, it is true, adduce enough facts to demolish most of the Castro legend. He is especially forthcoming with evidence that exposes the absolute falsehood of one of the most durable myths of the Cuban revolution: the notion that

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it was the lack of understanding and support from the United States that pushed Castro into the Soviet embrace.

Szulc demonstrates that from the very beginning, Castro had no intention of establishing a democratic government in Cuba. He carefully hid his true political intentions, going to such lengths, immediately after victory, as to establish a secret government to control Cuba. His clash with the United States was a coldly calculated move to reinforce and justify his personal power. To be sure, errors committed by Washington eased the process, but Castro's goal had been set well in advance. In view of the evidence provided by Szulc, it can be argued that it was Castro who pushed the Soviet Union into the Caribbean and not the other way around.

It is a pity that after supplying all this valuable information on the colossal deceit perpetrated by Castro, Szulc avoids examining the most tragic consequence of that deceit. Many Cubans who believed Castro's democratic promises paid dearly for the trust they placed in him. After the Castroite victory, *comandantes* of the rebel army and members of the 26th of July Movement, labor leaders, and underground fighters, all found themselves facing firing squads or in prison, branded "traitors" by the leader who had betrayed *them*.

Szulc knows this. He mentions some names from a long list of revolutionaries who were punished for remaining loyal to the initial promises made by Castro. He even alludes to the difference between the treatment meted out to political prisoners in Castro's Cuba and the treatment Fidel himself received in Batista's prisons, where he was allowed to read voraciously, to cook his own food, and to receive visitors. But he suspends judgment on this difference, preferring to remind us again of Fidel's inner generosity and charisma.

He cannot, however, avoid a note of melancholy in his final, summary chapter on the last twenty years in Cuba, and that inevitably somber tone may perhaps be more significant than anything else in the book. For it too is a sign, however unwillingly granted, that the long love affair between many American and European intellectuals and Fidel Castro may at last be approaching its end. Those who today cling to the illusions of a new revolutionary dawn have already begun to look elsewhere—to Nicaragua.

Polish Patriot

LETTERS FROM PRISON AND OTHER ESSAYS. By ADAM MICHNIK. Translated by MAYA LATYNSKI. *University of California Press. 354 pp. $25.00.*

Reviewed by MAURICE FRIEDBERG

A STRANGE country, Poland. A Soviet satellite state whose current dictator, Wojciech Jaruzelski, cannot, we are told, forgive an American Cabinet member for calling him a Soviet general in a Polish uniform. A country at different times hospitable and hostile to the Jews, which gave the world the current Israeli Prime Minister, his predecessor, and, indeed, the state's founding father. A Communist-ruled state that is staunchly Roman Catholic and is the homeland of the reigning Pope. Finally, to me, Poland, the land of my birth, is understandably synonymous with the Holocaust. It is the country where three-and-a-half-million Jews lived before the war and only some 6,000 remain; where, poignantly, not a single rabbi is to be found, but where, paradoxically, a Yiddish theater continues to function, though many of its performers—and most of its audiences in Warsaw—are Gentiles.

Incongruously, two of the most visible actors in the Polish drama of the last decade are Jews. One is General Jaruzelski's press spokes-

MAURICE FRIEDBERG *is professor of Russian literature at the University of Illinois, Urbana.*

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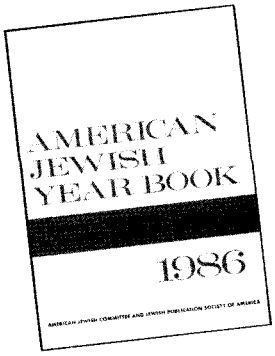

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man, Jerzy Urban. The other is a leading opponent of Jaruzelski, Adam Michnik. His letters sent from prison identify him with more precision: Adam, son of Ozjasz (Isaiah) Michnik. Occasionally, a third Jewish name—a ghost from a heroic past—may be briefly sighted in newspapers. Marek Edelman, a survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and now a physician in Lodz, is known for his sympathies with Solidarity. From time to time he publicly voices his support of Michnik, a son of prewar Jewish Communists and now a leading adviser to the banned trade union.

In between his many arrests, and sometimes while actually in prison, Michnik, a historian by training, a democrat, a Polish patriot, and a self-styled "pagan" (presumably to distance himself from his colleagues, nearly all of them at least nominal and some very devout Catholics, and perhaps from his Jewish background as well), has written widely on political and historical subjects. First published abroad, often under a pseudonym, or illegally circulated at home, these essays now appear in Maya Latynski's fine translation and with her helpful annotations. I am afraid, however, that these notwithstanding, many readers will be overwhelmed by an avalanche of unfamiliar proper names and "isms" that assume familiarity with Poland's complex history and rich literary tradition. They are likely to be still further confused by the inevitably disjointed quality of twenty articles written at different times and dealing with a variety of subjects.

ADAM MICHNIK was one of the founders, in September 1976, of KOR, the Committee for the Defense of Workers. In an unprecedented gesture of interclass unity in a "socialist" state, the Committee, which consisted of prominent members of the Polish intelligentsia, offered moral support, economic assistance, and legal aid to Polish workers hounded by the police and courts of the "proletarian" state. It also organized an impressive network of underground courses and seminars (the so-called "flying universities") which met, as they had during the Nazi occupation, in private apartments, as well as *samizdat* publication of unauthorized books and journals of every description. When, however, the rise of the Solidarity trade union made it plain five years later that these activities were largely being performed by the workers themselves, KOR decided to step aside. In a spectacular last act, in September 1981, it voted itself out of existence. Many of its ex-members then placed themselves at the disposal of Solidarity, the first free trade union in a Communist country.

Michnik, who is now out of jail, was among those who advised Solidarity to avoid sabotage and military actions. He writes:

> Why did Solidarity renounce violence? This question returned time and again in my conversations with foreign observers. . . . No one in Poland is able to prove today that violence will help us to dislodge Soviet troops from Poland and to remove the Communists from power. The USSR has such enormous military power that confrontation is simply unthinkable. In other words: we have no guns.

At the same time, Michnik persuasively argues, eschewing violence and conspiracy may have spared Poland an all-out Soviet military invasion, the more so since the avoidance of such an invasion was also in the interests of the Polish and Soviet authorities. (The former would have been transformed by it into Soviet-imposed policemen, and the latter would have had to endure international opprobrium for what would have certainly been a bloody war on Polish soil.) So far, events have proved Michnik right.

Adam Michnik, then, falls firmly within the tradition of 19th-century Polish positivism, with its rejection of the legacy of romanticism, a movement that in literature as in politics extolled theatrical heroism whatever the price. The positivists, by contrast, urged a path of moderation and unspectacular but lasting progress aimed at containing and if possible reversing the erosion of the Polish social fabric, and firming up the sense of Polish ethnic identity and dreams of eventual national sovereignty. Slow but steady progress, the positivists argued, strengthened the institutions that would act as custodians of the nation's spirit and values until a truly independent Poland came back to life. History attests that the unglamorous positivists offered the wiser counsel. In the aftermath of World War I, well over a century after the last partition of 1795 and the subsequent occupation of Poland by Germany, Austria-Hungary, and imperial Russia, Poland regained statehood.

POLAND'S present-day positivists, Lech Walesa and Adam Michnik among them, are men of courage and integrity waging a difficult struggle against enormous odds, and with only the Roman Catholic Church as an ally, and not an overly dependable one at that. The immediate future is, alas, bleak. As an article by Pawel Morga in the September 1986 issue of the émigré Polish monthly *Kultura* attests, Michnik had better be ready to endure, in addition to everything else, viciously anti-Semitic taunts from the Communist authorities and, sad to say, from some of his comrades as well.

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